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RUSSIA



The Vast Empire of the Czars, its Eventful History,
and its Incalculable Future

by
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A COUNTRY of continental proportions, stretching ever monotonously before the traveler's eye, with the sharpest contrasts of heat and cold, of flood and drought, of opulence and misery, of cul-

ture and primitive social conditions; a chaos of races and creeds, and a babel of tongues; historically in the main, but not wholly, European; geographically largely, but not entirely, Asiatic; a world within itself and



THE NEVSKI PROSPEKT, THE LONGEST AND BUSIEST STREET IN PETROGRAD, LINED WITH SHOPS, BANKS, AND BUSINESS HOUSES, AND TRAVERSED BY NUMEROUS LINES OF STREET-CARS

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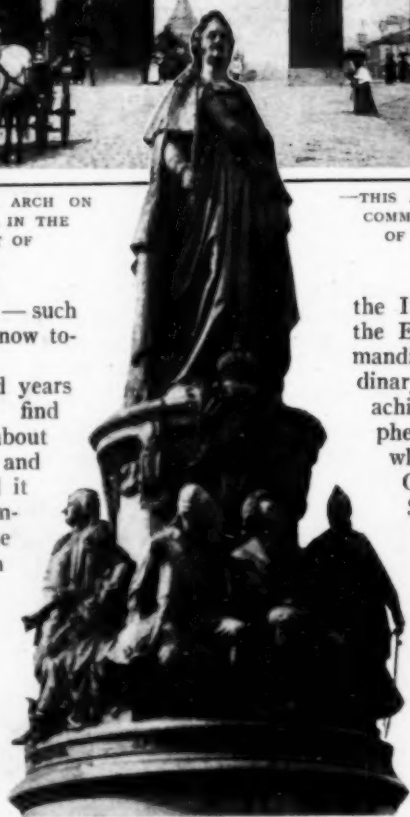
THE MOSCOW TRIUMPHAL ARCH ON ZABALKANSKI PROSPEKT, IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF PETROGRAD—

—THIS ARCHWAY, BUILT 1833-1838, COMMEMORATES THE VICTORIES OF NICHOLAS I IN TURKEY AND PERSIA

a world between worlds — such is the land which we know to-day as Russia.

Twenty-four hundred years ago Herodotus could find nothing extraordinary about it except the number and size of its rivers. And it is only within days comparatively recent that the civilized world has taken the same interest in the history and life of the great Muscovite dominion which for ages men have felt in the affairs of countries farther west and south.

In point of fact, the story of the Russian people, while different enough from that of the French,



MONUMENT OF CATHERINE THE GREAT, IN THE ALEXANDRA SQUARE, PETROGRAD, ERECTED IN 1873

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the Italians, the Germans, or the English, abounds in commanding personalities, extraordinary events, and monumental achievements. In view of the phenomenal rapidity with which the subjects of the Czar—in common with all Slavs—are increasing in numbers, together with the substantial modernization which they are now undergoing, it is as well assured as any great fact can be that in the next fifty years Russia will assume a place of importance in the world well in advance even of that which she occupies to-day. No conceivable outcome of the present Euro-

pean war can seriously interfere with the fulfilment of this prediction.

The initial fact to be grasped by one who would understand the Russia of our time is the immensity of the stage upon which

ritory as a whole, covering as it does one-sixth of the globe's land area, and one twenty-third of its entire surface, the Empire State could be set down one hundred and sixty-five times. Russia west of the Urals



GALLERY OF MODERN SCULPTURE IN THE HERMITAGE, THE GREAT ART MUSEUM OF PETROGRAD, CONTAINING STATUES BY CANOVA AND OTHER MODERN ARTISTS

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the nation's rôle in history has been played. Russia is preeminently the country of big things, and the biggest thing of all is the country itself.

In European Russia alone the State of New York could be set down forty times, with room to spare. In the Russian ter-

is ten times the size of France, thirty-three times the size of England and Wales. Among all recorded political creations, not even excepting the Roman Empire, the dominion of the Czar is surpassed in size only by Greater Britain.

There have been nations, and there are

some to-day, whose place in history has borne little or no relation to their physical extent. One such was Athens. Others were medieval Venice, the Florence of the Renaissance, and even the England of the precolonial era. And among contemporary states one thinks instantly of Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium.

Russia, however, is far from belonging to this category. With her, size has counted for well-nigh everything. Her expansive lands, her enor-

mous distances, her far-flung frontiers—in these it is that one must discover the principal elements of both her historic strength and her weaknesses.

The origins and the present racial composition of the Russian people are problems with which the ethnologists long have wrestled. Just as in France there has been furious debate upon the proportion of Teutonic, Roman, and Gallic blood in the veins of modern Frenchmen, so in Russia has there been discussion, per-

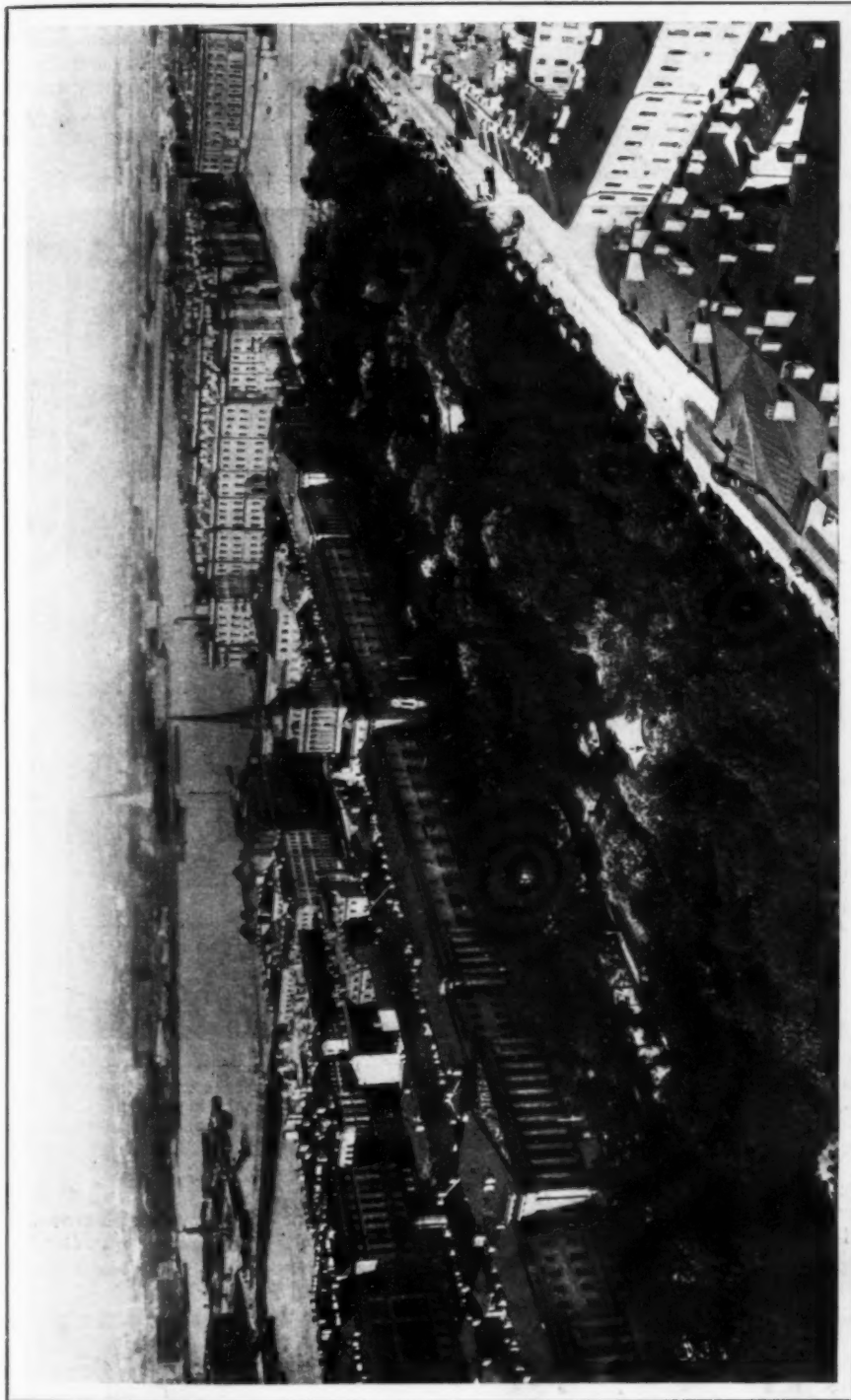


EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT, IN THE PETER SQUARE, PETROGRAD, ERECTED BY CATHERINE II IN 1782

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THE ALEXANDRA THEATER, PETROGRAD, BUILT IN 1832 AND NAMED AFTER THE CZARINA ALEXANDRA, WIFE OF NICHOLAS I—IN FRONT OF THIS BUILDING STANDS THE MONUMENT OF CATHERINE II, SHOWN ON PAGE 642



VIEW OF PETROGRAD AND THE RIVER NEVA, LOOKING NORTHWARD FROM THE DOME OF ST. ISAAC'S CATHEDRAL—IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE ALEXANDER GARDEN, UPON WHICH FRONTS THE LONG FACADE OF THE ADMIRALTY, WITH ITS CENTRAL SPIRE—BEYOND THIS, TO THE RIGHT, IS THE WINTER PALACE

meated by no small amount of pride, patriotism, and prejudice, of the question whether the Russian of to-day is a mixed or an unmixed Slav, and whether, indeed, he is a Slav at all.

The results have not been at all points

stretching eastward to the Pacific. The Urals, low and abounding in passes, could never have interposed a serious barrier to the incursion or migration of Asiatic races; and the presumption still is that it was across the Urals, in successive waves of



FAÇADE OF THE WINTER PALACE, THE WINTER RESIDENCE OF THE CZAR, AS SEEN FROM THE ARCHWAY OF THE WAR OFFICE, PETROGRAD. IN FRONT OF THE PALACE IS THE ALEXANDER COLUMN, A HUGE GRANITE MONOLITH ERECTED BY NICHOLAS I TO THE MEMORY OF HIS BROTHER, ALEXANDER I

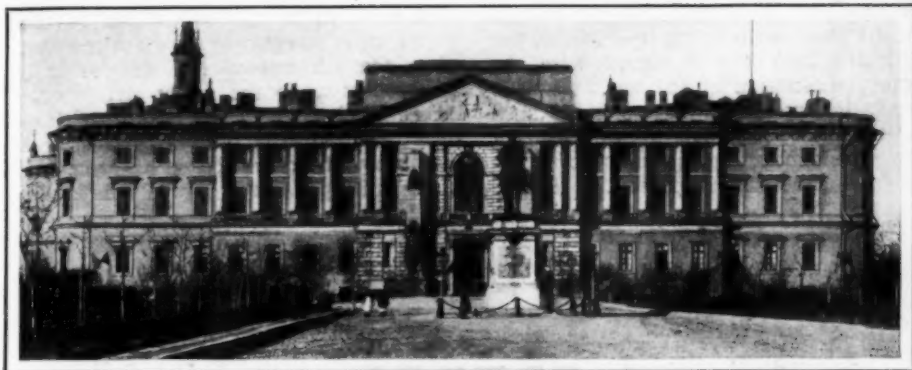
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conclusive; but it may be said to have been established that the Russians are descended from peoples who were among the later comers into Europe, and also that they are a people of mixed blood, speech, and character.

Geographically, Russia is continuous with the broad plains of northern Asia,

migration, that the great peoples of the West—the Celts, the Teutons, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Slavs—came into their European habitations.

Concerning these prehistoric movements we have not a shred of direct information. The earliest occupants of the Russian territories of whom we have record were the



THE OLD MICHAEL PALACE, PETROGRAD, BUILT BY THE CZAR PAUL IN 1797-1800, NOW USED AS A SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND KNOWN AS THE ENGINEERS' PALACE

Finns, an Asiatic people whose hardy descendants live in the Russian dependency of Finland to this day. The Finns were not Slavs, but were akin to the Huns, Bulgars, Avars, Khazars, Petchenegs, and other Turkish or semi-Turkish peoples whose incursions constituted a disturbing element in the history of eastern Europe from the third to the thirteenth century.

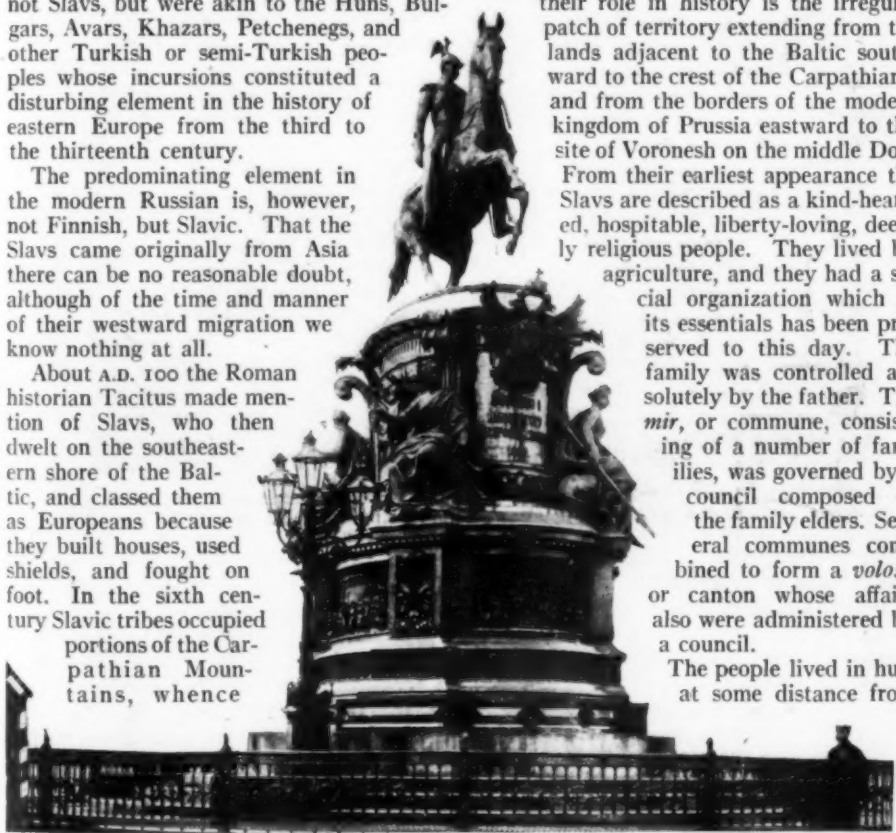
The predominating element in the modern Russian is, however, not Finnish, but Slavic. That the Slavs came originally from Asia there can be no reasonable doubt, although of the time and manner of their westward migration we know nothing at all.

About A.D. 100 the Roman historian Tacitus made mention of Slavs, who then dwelt on the southeastern shore of the Baltic, and classed them as Europeans because they built houses, used shields, and fought on foot. In the sixth century Slavic tribes occupied portions of the Carpathian Mountains, whence

they raided the outlying territories of the Eastern Empire. The scene upon which the Slavs as a people really began to play their rôle in history is the irregular patch of territory extending from the lands adjacent to the Baltic southward to the crest of the Carpathians, and from the borders of the modern kingdom of Prussia eastward to the site of Voronezh on the middle Don.

From their earliest appearance the Slavs are described as a kind-hearted, hospitable, liberty-loving, deeply religious people. They lived by agriculture, and they had a social organization which in its essentials has been preserved to this day. The family was controlled absolutely by the father. The *mir*, or commune, consisting of a number of families, was governed by a council composed of the family elders. Several communes combined to form a *volost*, or canton whose affairs also were administered by a council.

The people lived in huts at some distance from



MONUMENT OF THE CZAR NICHOLAS I. IN THE MARIE SQUARE, PETROGRAD, ERECTED IN 1859—THE SEATED FIGURES ON THE PEDESTAL REPRESENT JUSTICE, STRENGTH, WISDOM, AND FAITH, AND ARE PORTRAITS OF THE CZAR'S WIFE AND DAUGHTERS

one another. While each family owned a bit of ground surrounding its dwelling, the cultivated land and pasturage were the common possession of the *mir*. As newcomers in Europe the Slavs seem to have had the robust physique, the eyes ranging from blue to gray, and the auburn or chestnut hair of the Russian peasant of to-day;

they came under the domination of the Khazars. It was only in the ninth century, when the Khazars were forced to turn their attention to the newly arrived and hostile Petchenegs, that the Slavs regained their independence. And here it is that the history of modern Russia really begins.

The principal source of weakness in the



THE NARVA TRIUMPHAL ARCH, IN THE NARVA SQUARE, PETROGRAD, BUILT IN 1814 TO COMMEMORATE THE DEFEAT OF NAPOLEON'S INVASION OF RUSSIA IN 1812

they wore the same short blouse and the same closely fitting trousers, tucked into the same high boots.

The lot of the Slavs in their new home was at first unpromising. They were not numerous, and on every side they were beset by powerful and hostile neighbors. From the sixth to the ninth centuries they lived through various periods of subjection to the semibarbaric peoples who occupied their part of the world.

First they suffered from the Goths; then the Avars became their masters; finally,

earlier days had been the lack of national unity and of political centralization; and the prevalence of internal dissension seemed to preclude the possibility that such unity and centralization should ever be developed. But what not even the pressure of barbarian subjugation could accomplish was readily achieved by the constructive leadership of a foreign element deliberately imported, so we are told, for the purpose.

According to the chronicle attributed to Nestor, a monk of Kiev, who lived in the eleventh century, the Slavs dwelling about



WEST END OF THE ALEXANDER GARDEN AND OF THE ADMIRALTY, PETROGRAD, LOOKING ACROSS THE RIVER NEVA TO THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



THE PETROGRAD EXCHANGE, BUILT IN 1804-1811 BY THE FRENCH ARCHITECT THOMON, AND NOTABLE FOR ITS MASSIVE PERISTYLE OF FORTY-FOUR DORIC COLUMNS

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Novgorod, together with the friendly Finns of the region, at length grew weary of turbulence and disunion. In the year 862 they sent a deputation overseas to the Varyags, or Varangers, a Scandinavian peo-

ple to the call, and that the early death of Sineus and Truvor left Rurik sole ruler of the Slavic country.

The story may or may not be true. What happened, very likely, was some-

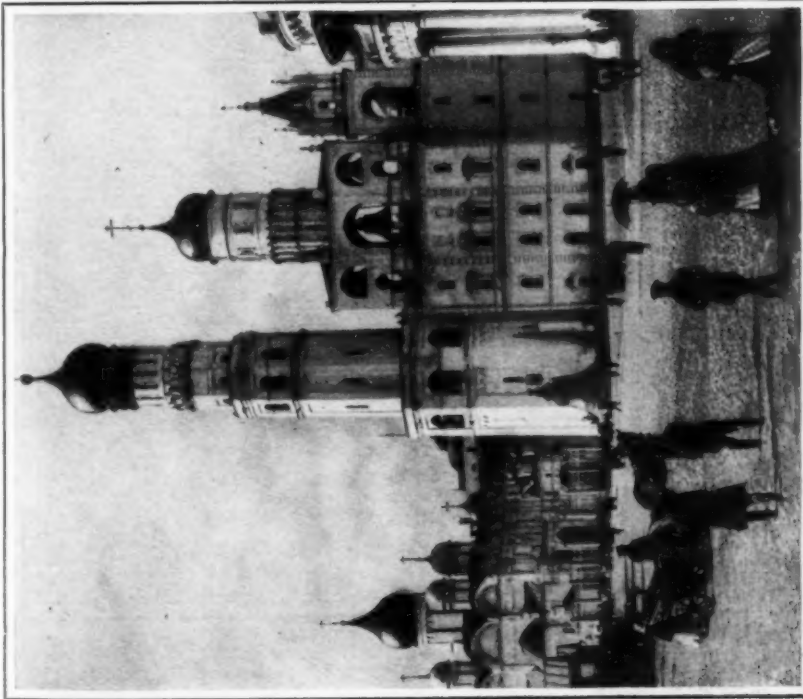


THE IZMAILOV CATHEDRAL, PETROGRAD—ITS FIVE BLUE DOMES, SPRINKLED WITH STARS, FORM ONE OF THE LANDMARKS OF THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL—ON THE RIGHT IS THE MONUMENT OF FAME, CAST FROM CANNON CAPTURED FROM THE TURKS IN 1877

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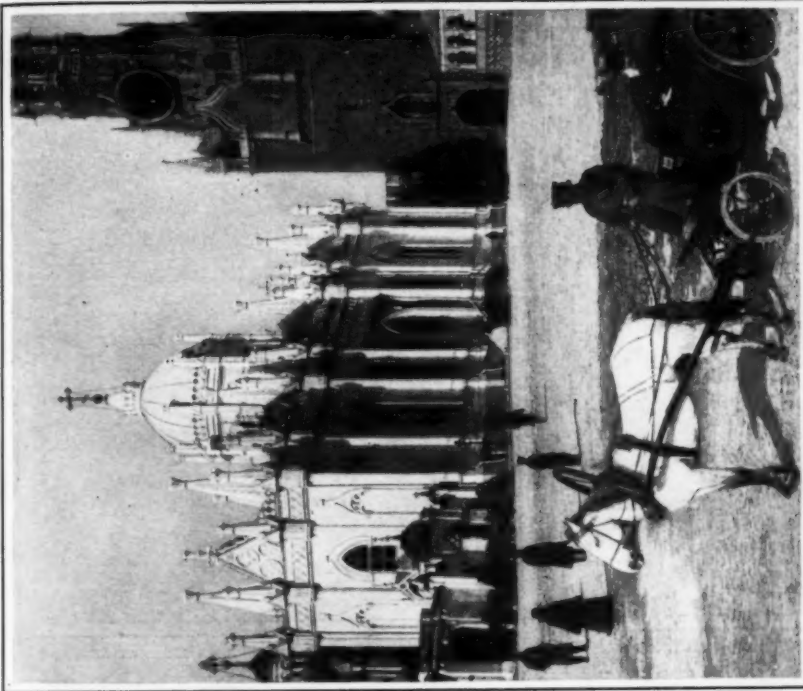
ple reputed for their organizing talent and their military prowess, and invited them to come in and rule. The legend goes on to say that three brothers, Rurik, Sineus, and Truvor, with their followers, responded

thing more nearly resembling a Scandinavian invasion, not unlike the incursions which the so-called Northmen and the Danes were making in the same period upon the coasts of France and England.



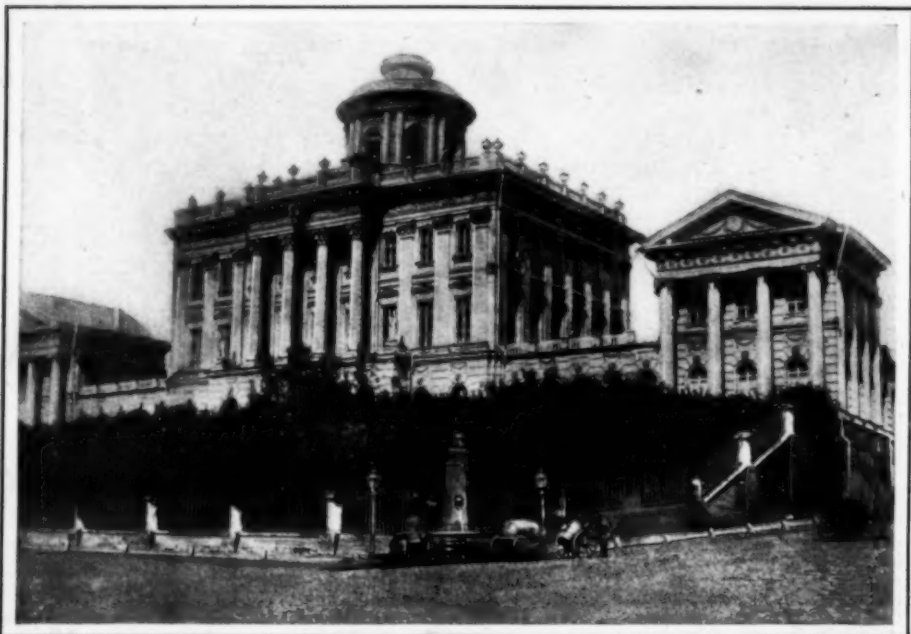
IN THE KREMLIN OF MOSCOW—THE TOWER OF IVAN VELIKI (JOHN THE GREAT), WHOSE BELLS ANNOUNCE THE CROWNING OF A NEW CZAR—AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWER IS THE CZAR KOLOKOL, OR GREAT BELL

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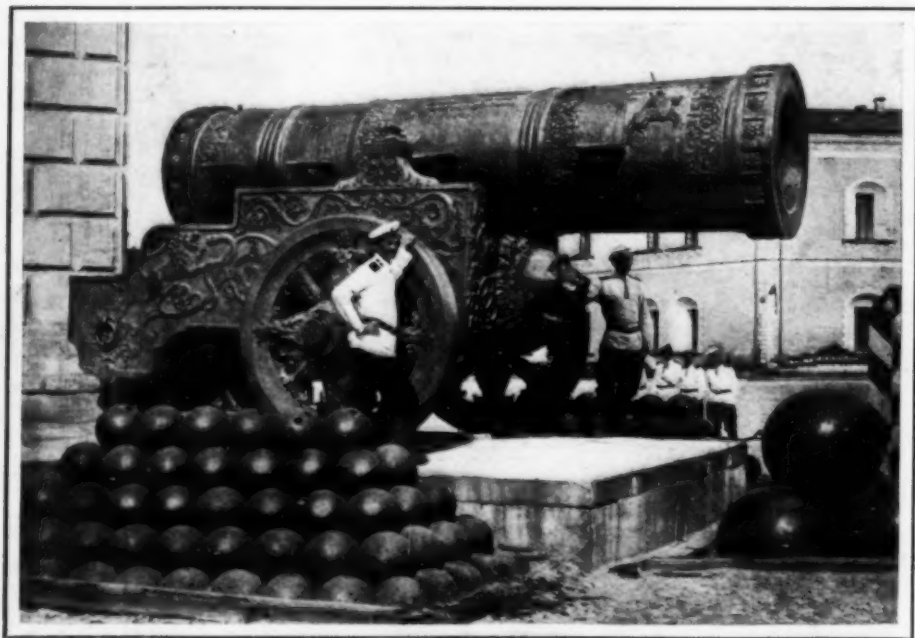


IN THE KREMLIN OF MOSCOW—THE VOZNESENSKI CONVENT, IN WHICH THIRTY-EIGHT EMPRESSES AND PRINCESSES ARE BURIED, AND (ON THE RIGHT) THE GATE OF THE REDEEMER, IN PASSING WHICH MEN MUST BARE THEIR HEADS

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THE IMPERIAL RUMYANTZOV MUSEUM, MOSCOW, ERECTED IN 1787 TO HOUSE THE LIBRARY AND ART COLLECTION OF COUNT NICHOLAS RUMYANTZOV, AND SINCE ENLARGED



THE CZAR CANNON, WHICH STANDS IN FRONT OF THE KREMLIN BARRACKS, MOSCOW—IT WAS CAST IN 1586, BUT HAS NEVER BEEN USED; ITS BORE IS FORTY INCHES, AND ITS CANNON-BALLS, SEEN ON THE RIGHT, WEIGH NEARLY TWO TONS APIECE

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



MOSCOW—THE GREAT KAMENNI BRIDGE, THE RIVER NEVA, AND THE TOWERS AND DOMES OF THE KREMLIN—THE LARGE BUILDING ON THE LEFT IS THE GREAT KREMLIN PALACE, BUILT IN 1838-1849 ON THE SITE OF OLDER PALACES OF THE EARLY CZARS

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York

Lake Ilmen and the river Volkhov, on which stands Novgorod, Rurik's capital, formed links in the primitive waterway from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and we

The invitation from Novgorod may well be a fiction devised subsequently for patriotic reasons, as was probably the invitation supposed to have been extended by



THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, ON THE MALAYA DMITROVKA, IN THE NORTHWESTERN QUARTER OF MOSCOW—WITH ITS BIZARRE ARRAY OF BULBOUS DOMES, THIS CHURCH IS A CHARACTERISTIC SPECIMEN OF MODERN RUSSIAN ARCHITECTURE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

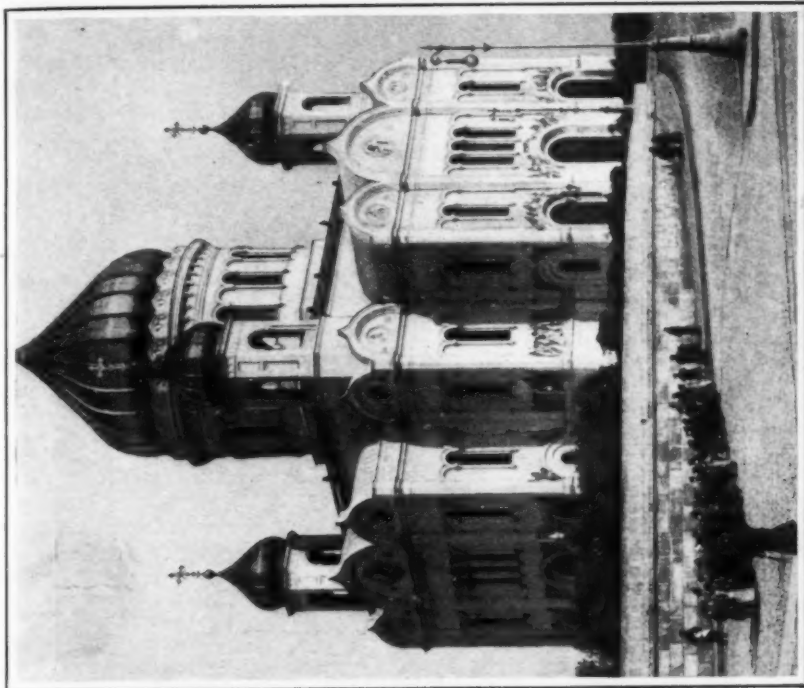
know that by this route there traveled the tall, fair-haired Northmen who composed the famous Verangian body-guard of the Byzantine emperors.

the Britons to the Jutish chieftains Hengist and Horsa four hundred years earlier. But the important thing is that the Verangers came, that they assumed unrestricted



THE GREAT BELL OF THE KREMLIN, THE LARGEST BELL IN THE WORLD
(SEE PAGE 651)—IT WAS CAST FOR THE CZARINA ANNA IN 1735,
BUT WAS BROKEN BEFORE IT COULD BE HUNG

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York



THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, ONE OF THE LARGEST AND FINEST CHURCHES
OF MOSCOW, BUILT IN 1839-1883 TO COMMEMORATE THE
DEFEAT OF NAPOLEON'S INVASION OF RUSSIA

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THE CATHEDRAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION, ONE OF THE NUMEROUS CHURCHES WITHIN THE WALLS OF THE KREMLIN OF MOSCOW—IN THIS CATHEDRAL, FOUNDED IN 1397, THE RUSSIAN CZARS ARE BAPTIZED AND WEDDED

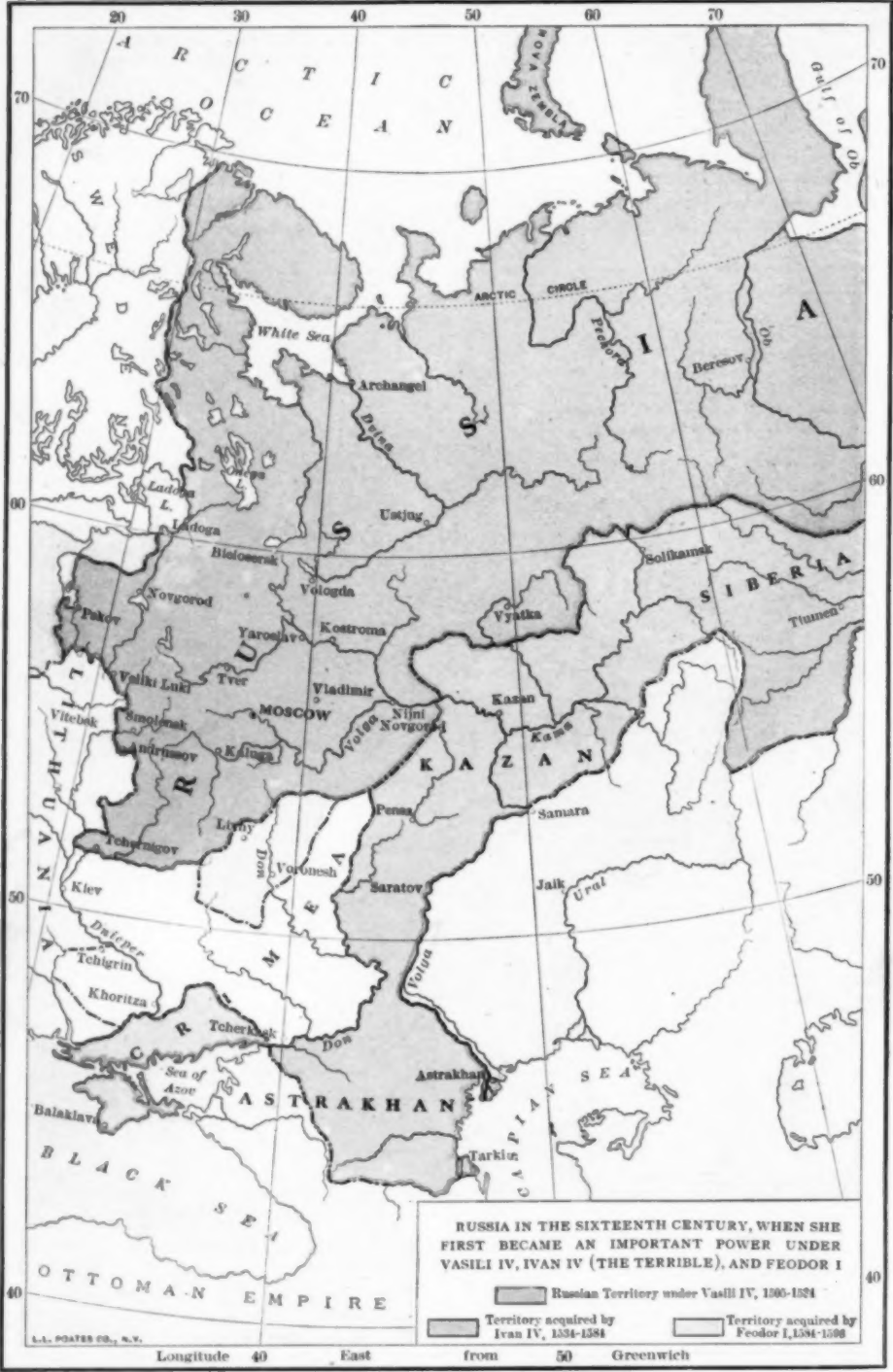
control, and that under their leadership the Slavs made their first successful efforts in state-building.

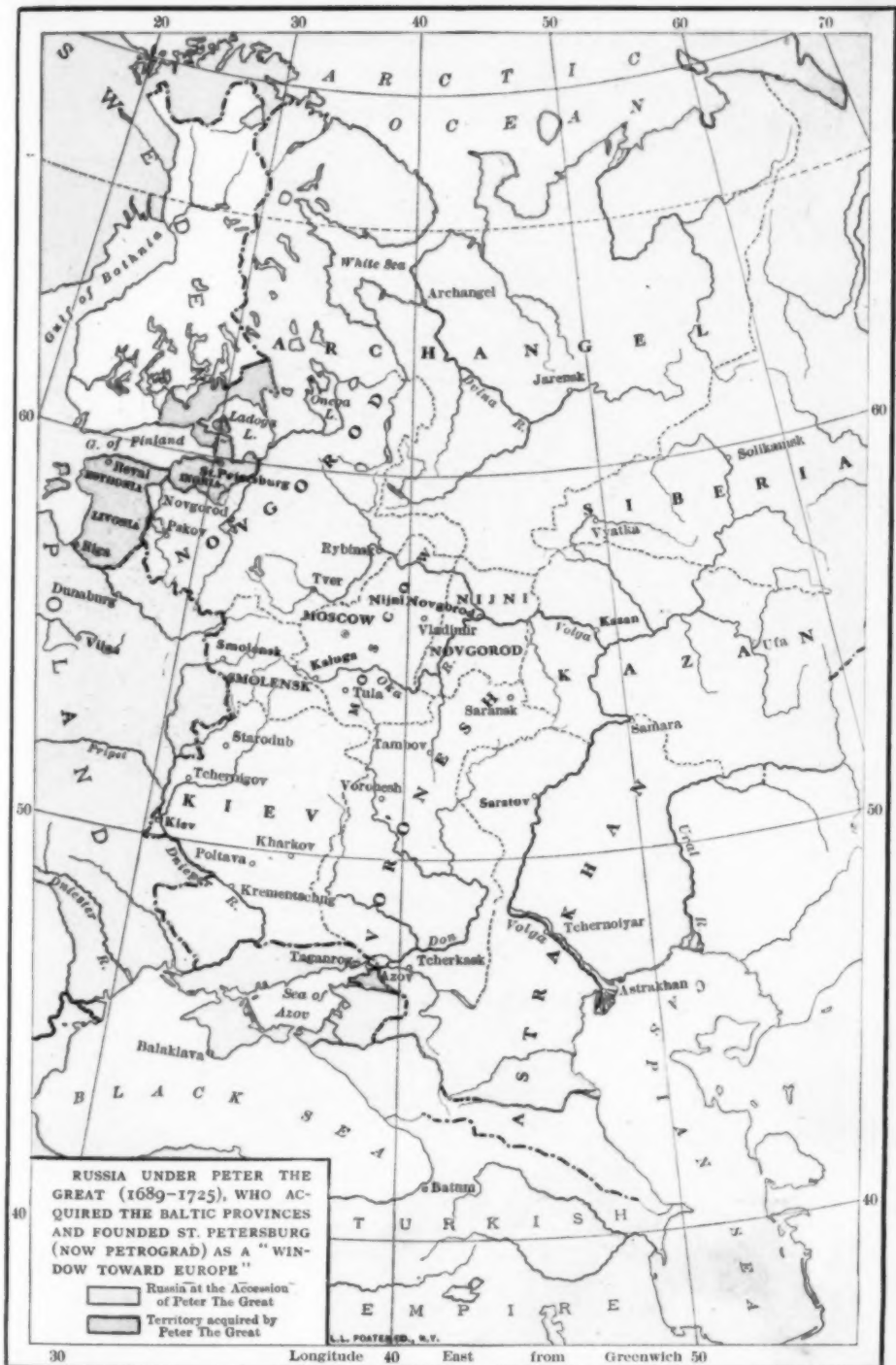
It was now that the country, known hitherto as Slavonia, acquired among foreigners the name Rus, from which in the seventeenth century the modern name Russia was formed on the analogy of Græcia and other classical names. The name Russi, first applied by the Finns to the Veranger newcomers, ended by being applied indiscriminately to all of the inhabitants of the Veranger dominions.

The capital of the new state was at first Novgorod; but Rurik's brother and successor, Oleg, after finally breaking the power of the Khazars over the southern Slavs, took up his residence at Kiev, on the Dnieper, a town which was destined to remain the chief seat of Russian political authority until the rise of Moscow.

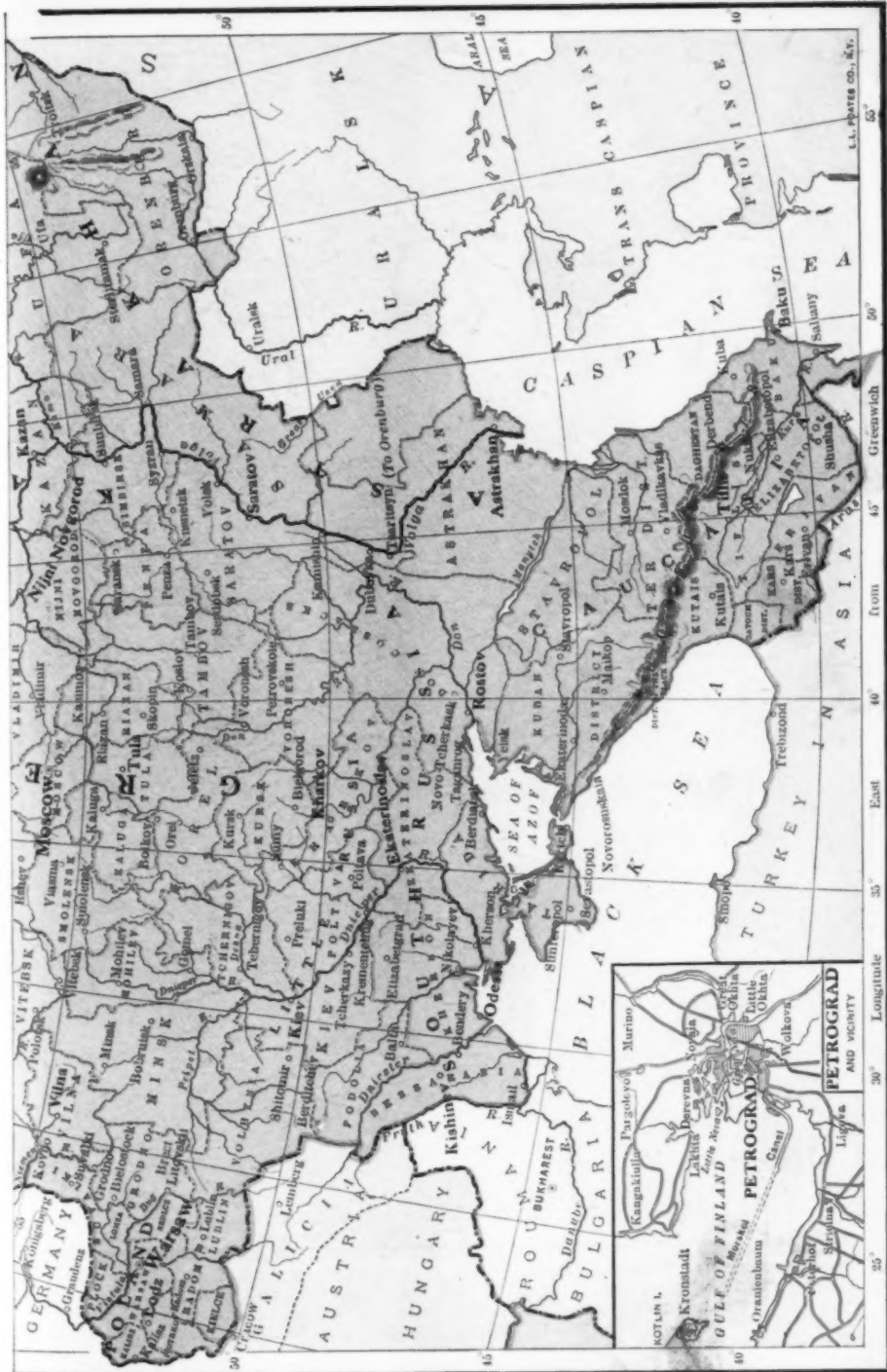
The Verangerian princes were men of much vigor. They conquered broad stretches of territory, and under their protection the Russian population began to spread far to the east, northeast, and south. They invaded the Byzantine lands, threatened Constantinople, and obtained as a consort for one of their number a sister of a Byzantine emperor. They learned to hold in check the nomadic tribes of the steppe, and formed marriage alliances with the ruling families of Poland, Hungary, Norway, and France. For a time the principality gave promise of becoming the dominant power of central and eastern Europe.

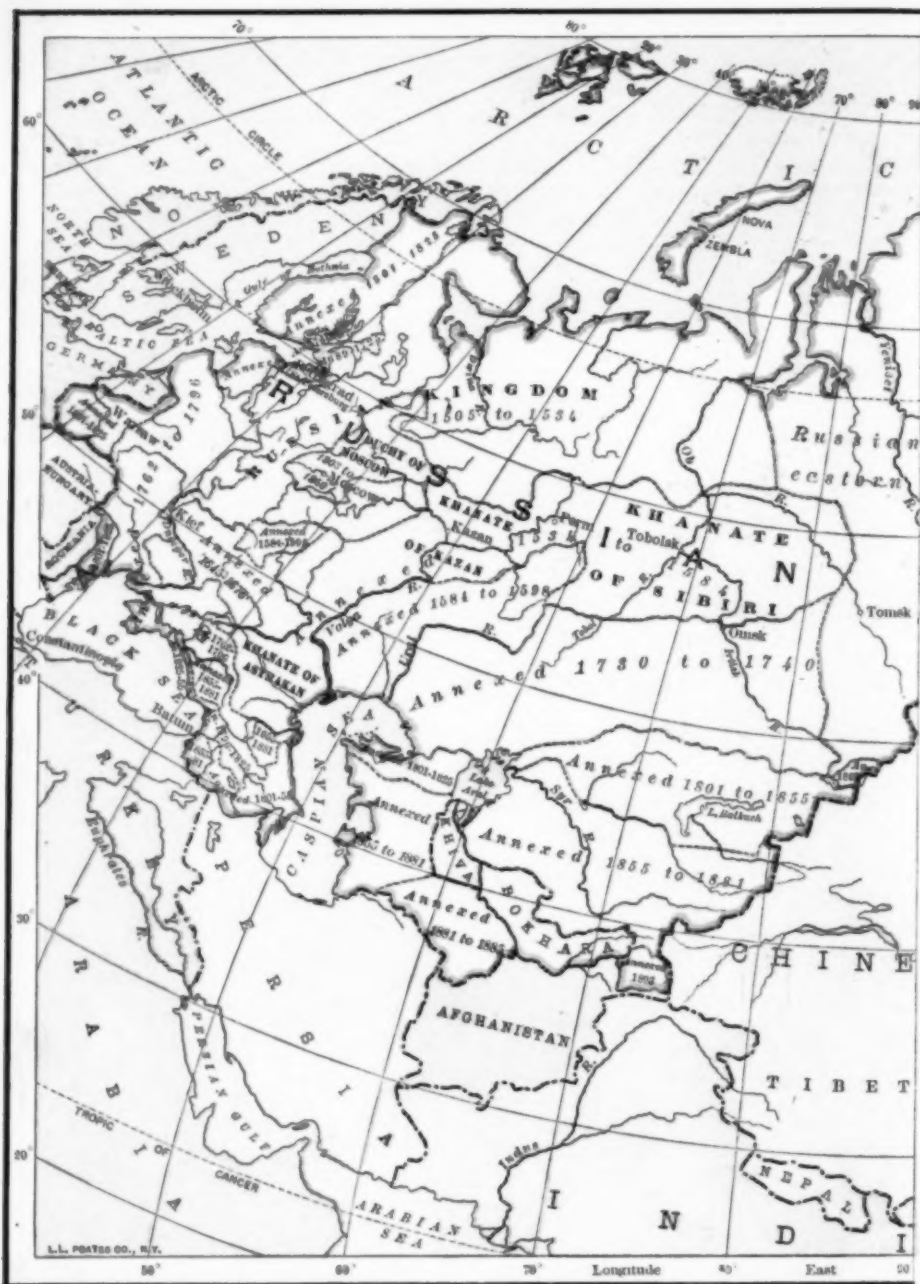
The promise, however, was only partially fulfilled. Consolidation within failed entirely to keep pace with expansion without. In effect the Russian country was a gigantic family estate belonging to the Rurik dynasty, and each member of the family



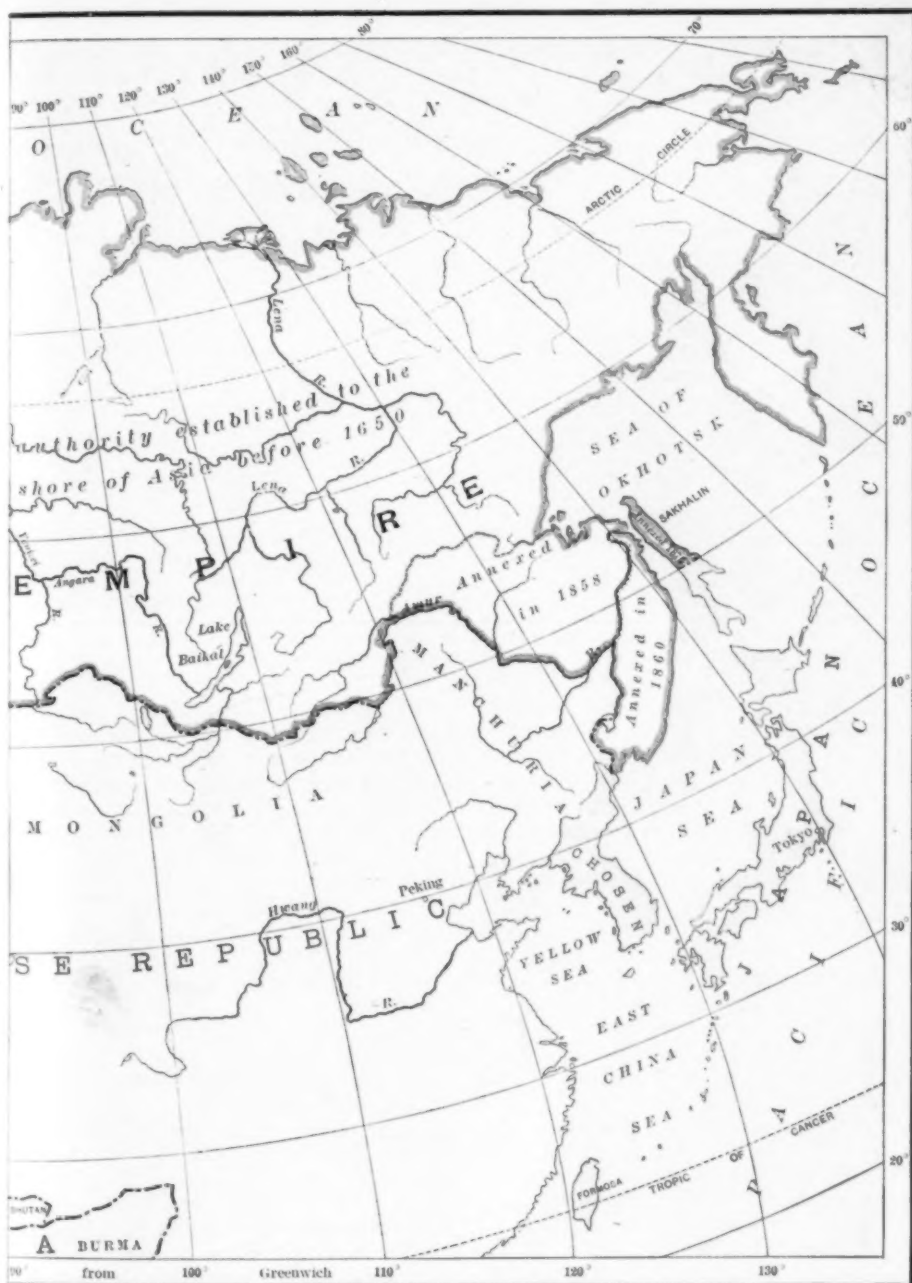








THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN EUROPE AND ASIA—TOTAL AREA, 8,764,526 SQUARE MILES, EQUAL TO ONE-SEVENTH OF THE ENTIRE LAND SURFACE OF THE GLOBE; POPULATION (1912), 171,059,900—THE GROWTH OF THE EMPIRE'S POPULATION IS VERY RAPID, ITS INCREASE DURING THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS HAVING BEEN NO LESS THAN 41,850,000, IN SPITE OF THE EMIGRATION OF MORE THAN 2,000,000 RUSSIANS TO THE UNITED STATES



THE DATES ON THIS MAP SHOW THE REMARKABLE EXPANSION OF RUSSIA DURING THE LAST FOUR HUNDRED YEARS FROM THE COMPARATIVELY TINY NUCLEUS OF THE DUCHY OR PRINCIPALITY OF MOSCOW TO THE PRESENT VAST DIMENSIONS OF THE EMPIRE—THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE ISLAND OF SAKHALIN WAS CEDED TO JAPAN IN 1905; ALASKA (NOT SHOWN IN THIS MAP) WAS SOLD TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1867



THE LUBYANSKAYA SQUARE AND VLADIMIR GATE, MOSCOW—THIS IS ONE OF THE ENTRANCES TO THE KITAI GOROD, OR OLD FORTIFIED CITY, THE MOST ANCIENT PART OF MOSCOW AFTER THE KREMLIN

entire valley of the Dnieper fell prey to marauding tribes of the steppe.

Russian political leadership now passed northward again, and for a time the hegemony of such principalities as survived was held by Novgorod, which in the mean time had become a great commercial city and a member of the Hanseatic League. Novgorod had a prince, but his functions were merely nominal, and the real governing power was the *vetche*, or assembly of citizens, which was called together whenever there was need by the tolling of the great bell in the market-place.

In this municipal republic, reminding one not a little of contemporary Venice, lay the germ of a possible republican Russian nation; but the germ was destined not to grow. When Russia eventually achieved substantial political unity and national organization, it was rather under the leadership of the autocratic princes of the rival city of Moscow.

Meanwhile the Slavic elements of the population were proving that, although not advanced politically, they were made of stern stuff and deserved to survive. They assimilated both their Finnish neighbors and their Scandinavian liberators without surrendering any essential part of their

racial character. The small eyes, the large nose, the thick lips, and the high cheekbones which are not uncommon among the Russian peasantry to-day are evidences of Finnish influence; but that influence seems not to have extended beyond matters of physiognomy. The addition of ten words, according to a renowned philologist, represents the total impress made by the Scandinavians upon the Russian speech; and upon the Russian character the Scandinavian intermixture had no effect which can be traced.

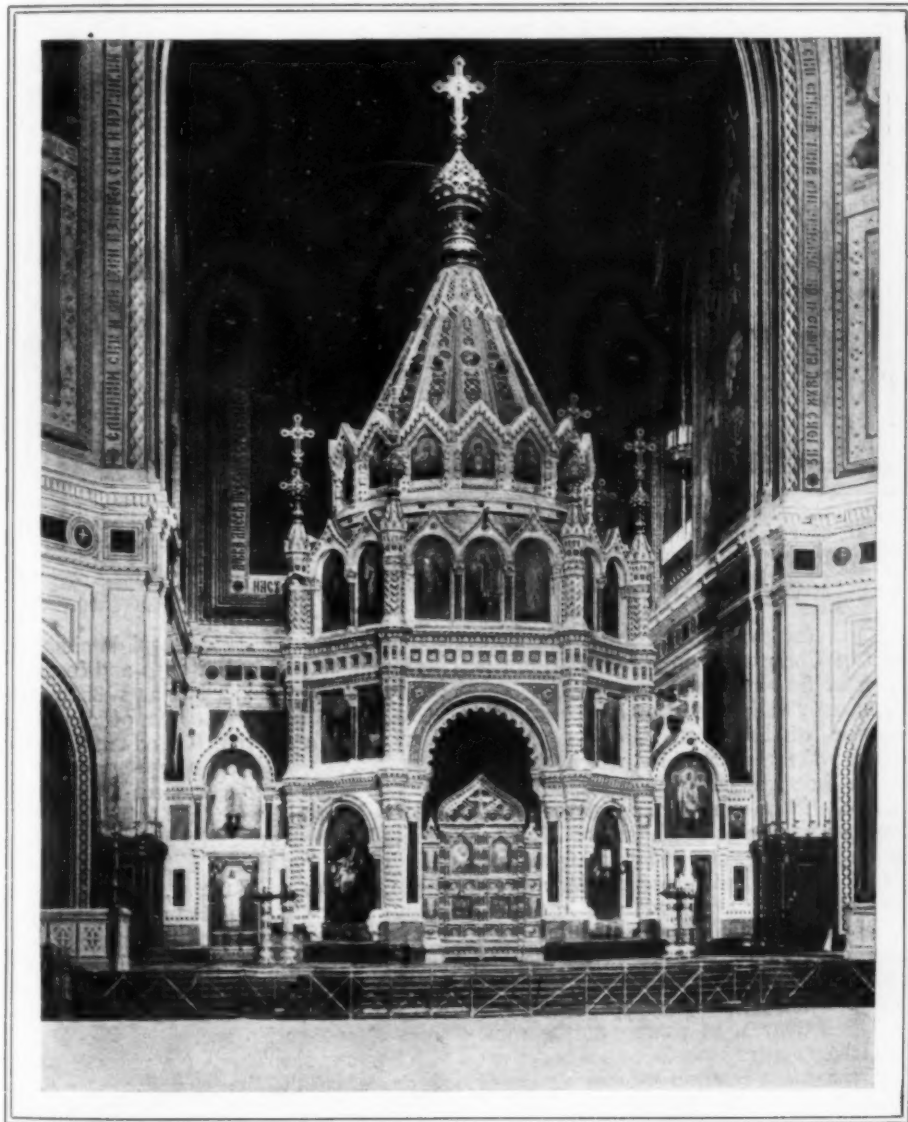
At one point only did the Slavs in this period yield to foreign influence, and this was in the matter of religion. Shortly after the founding of Kiev, Greek missionaries began to make an assault upon the primitive paganism of the people, and in the later tenth century their efforts were crowned with success.

The chronicler tells us that Prince Vladimir I (980-1015), whose grandmother had been baptized at Constantinople, decided to adopt for himself and his people some religion that would be superior to his pagan creed, and that, after he had sent ambassadors to investigate the claims of the Hebrew, Mohammedan, Catholic, and Greek doctrines, he made choice of the Greek.

After traveling to Constantinople to be baptized, in 988, in true autocratic fashion he caused his subjects to undergo the same rite *en masse*. Before the eyes of the as-

being hurled from a lofty cliff into a raging stream.

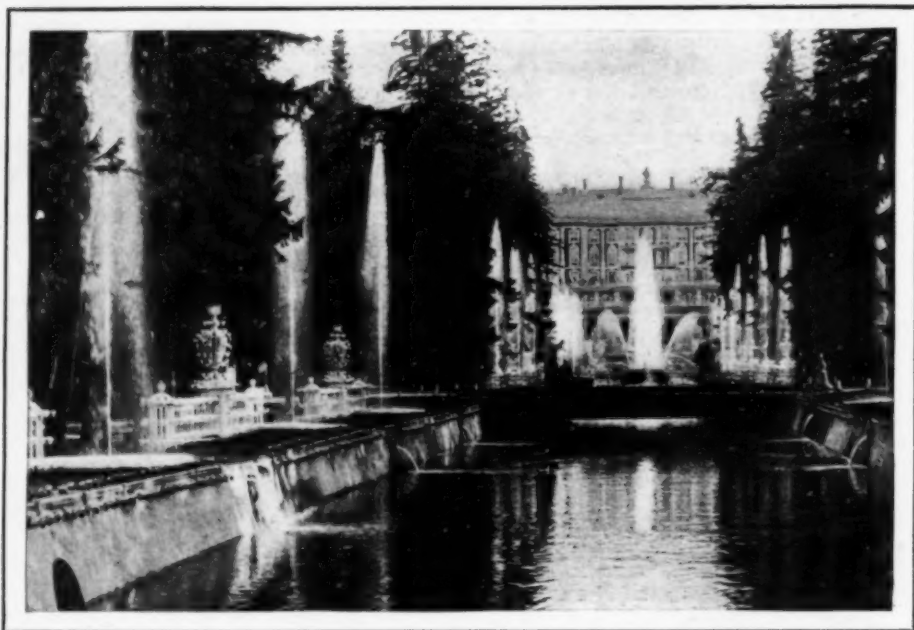
The story of Vladimir's choice may be only a legend. The circumstance that at



THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, THE MOST GORGEOUSLY DECORATED IN MOSCOW—THE EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH IS SHOWN ON PAGE 655

sembled people the ancient idols were destroyed, some by being hewn in pieces, some by being burned, and the greatest of them all, the enormous image of Perun, by

the time of his baptism the Kiev ruler married a Byzantine princess suggests strongly that there may have been in the transaction an element of political expediency. But



THE FOUNTAINS OF THE IMPERIAL PALACE OF PETERHOF, THE CZAR'S SUMMER RESIDENCE ON THE SHORE OF THE GULF OF FINLAND, EIGHTEEN MILES FROM PETROGRAD—THE PALACE WAS BUILT BY PETER THE GREAT IN IMITATION OF VERSAILLES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

in any event the acceptance by the Russians of Christianity in its Greek form is a fact of first-rate importance.

Not only did Russia early acquire the headship of the great Greek Orthodox Church; the responsibility which the nation in time assumed for the protection of Greek Christians in all parts of the world from persecution at the hands of Mohammedan powers became an actuating motive, as well as a convenient pretext, for aggressive policy in Asiatic lands and in the direction of Constantinople. Furthermore, contact with the advanced civilization of the Greek world wonderfully stimulated Russian learning, literature, art, music, and wealth; although, of course, at the same time the country was effectually cut off from the great intellectual community of which Rome was the center.

Passing over a prolonged period—roughly, from the middle of the eleventh to the middle of the thirteenth century—which was filled with civil dissensions of minor interest, one comes upon an epoch in which the history of Russia assumes again a stirring and even a dramatic character.

This is the era of the Mongol domination, beginning shortly before 1250 and continuing in some degree as late as 1480. Outwardly the period was one of conquest, degradation, and even eclipse; but actually it proved the birth era of the great united Russian nationality of modern times.

The Mongols were an Asiatic people, kindred to the Turks, who under the leadership of an ambitious chieftain, Genghis Khan (Ruler of Rulers), became especially active in the early years of the thirteenth century. They invaded China, captured Peking, and in the course of their gigantic marauding expeditions fell unexpectedly and irresistibly upon the populations of eastern Europe.

"For our sins," writes a pious Russian chronicler of the time, "unknown nations arrived. No one knew their origin, or whence they came, or what religion they practised. That is known only to God, and perhaps to wise men learned in books."

In the year 1224 some of the Russian princes were persuaded to join forces with their nomadic neighbors on the east in an effort to repel the invaders. In a great bat-

tle on the banks of the Kalka, in southern Russia, the allies were totally defeated, and the country found itself left practically defenseless. It was spared a little while, for instead of advancing, the barbarians fell back upon their Asiatic dominions.

Thirteen years later, however, they returned, and this time they chose to remain. They burned Moscow, which as yet was a town of small importance, took Tver and Kiev, ravaged Galicia and Volhynia, and built for themselves a capital, called Sarai, the ruins of which are still to be seen on the lower Volga. Here the commander of the Golden Horde, as the western branch of the Mongol host was designated, established his headquarters and governed in the name of his master, the Grand Khan, who dwelt with the Great Horde in the valley of the Amur. All Russia save Novgorod was brought under his control.

The Mongol conquest fixed the low-water mark of Russian history. For more than two hundred years the country, with a swarm of nomads encamped upon its frontiers, was momentarily liable to the shock of invasion. There were repeated

inroads, when towns were burned, property was destroyed, and wretched prisoners by the thousands, roped in long trains with sheep and cattle, were driven over the steppes, destined for the slave-markets. Between irruptions the people were compelled to pay tribute, in money or in furs. All sense of patriotism, racial pride, and public obligation disappeared; while the instincts of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement ran riot.

But the situation might have been worse. In the first place, the conquerors retained their pastoral manner of life and confined their habitation to the steppes of the south, so that they did not greatly disturb the every-day existence of the mass of the subject peoples. Normally, the khans were content with the tribute and homage of the Russian provinces, and had no desire to interfere with their internal affairs.

In the second place, the general policy of the conquerors was lenient. They made no attempt to Mongolize their subjects; and even after they embraced Mohammedanism, in 1272, they were entirely tolerant of the Russian faith.



THE GREAT IMPERIAL PALACE OF TZARSKOYE SELO, THE CHIEF SUBURBAN RESIDENCE OF THE CZAR, FIFTEEN MILES SOUTH OF PETROGRAD—THE FAÇADE OF THE PALACE, BUILT IN 1747-1756, IS MORE THAN SIXTEEN HUNDRED FEET LONG

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

The extent to which, during the prolonged period of contact, the Russian stock and character were altered by Mongol influences is a matter of speculation. It is an established fact that the Russians were gradually taking on a good many habits that were Oriental. Dress was becoming Eastern, as is illustrated by the increased

and find a Tatar," was hardly in accordance with fact.

Kipling has declared in one of his stories that the mistake Englishmen have made in dealing with Russia is that they have treated her as the most eastern of European nations, rather than as the most western of Oriental nations. Whether this is true



THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS CHURCH, BUILT IN 1830-1852, THE CHIEF LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HELSINGFORS, THE CAPITAL OF FINLAND—IN THE FOREGROUND IS A MONUMENT TO THE CZAR ALEXANDER II, ERECTED IN 1894

use of the *caftan*, or flowing robe, which Peter the Great subsequently sought to abolish. Ceremonialism was growing; likewise the seclusion of women; and punishment with the *knout* was being introduced.

But the best opinion is that Russia's semiorientalization came as a result of contact with Constantinople, and not from Mongol influence. Very few Mongol words crept into the Russian vocabulary; very little Mongol blood entered Russian veins. The old French saying, "Scratch a Russian

or not, it is distinctly untrue that, as many people suppose, Russia lost her European character in consequence of the Mongol subjugation.

On the contrary, that subjugation had the general effect of checking the deadly internecine strife of the Russian princes. It strengthened the national religion, and gave it its present inextricable connection with the national feeling. It contributed vitally to the eventual consolidation of the country by lessening the strength of the



TIFLIS, THE CAPITAL OF THE VICEROYALTY OF THE CAUCASUS, A CITY OF THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND PEOPLE—NEAR THE CENTER OF THE ENGRAVING IS THE NIKOLAEVSKI BRIDGE, CROSSING AN ARM OF THE KURA RIVER

towns and of the aristocratic boyar class, by maintaining the authority of the more powerful princes against the lesser ones, by reducing the princes in number, and by stimulating, quite inadvertently, the growth of the most important princely power of all, that of Moscow.

The rise of the principality of Moscow

they annexed territory until by 1462 they had made theirs the largest principality in the country. Encouraged by the national church, they broke up free republics, suppressed popular assemblies, and gathered into their hands all the essentials of autocratic power.

Instead of engaging in rebellion against



THE OPERA-HOUSE OF ODESSA, ONE OF THE FINEST BUILDINGS OF THE KIND IN RUSSIA—ODESSA, WITH A POPULATION OF SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND, IS RUSSIA'S GREAT GRAIN PORT ON THE BLACK SEA

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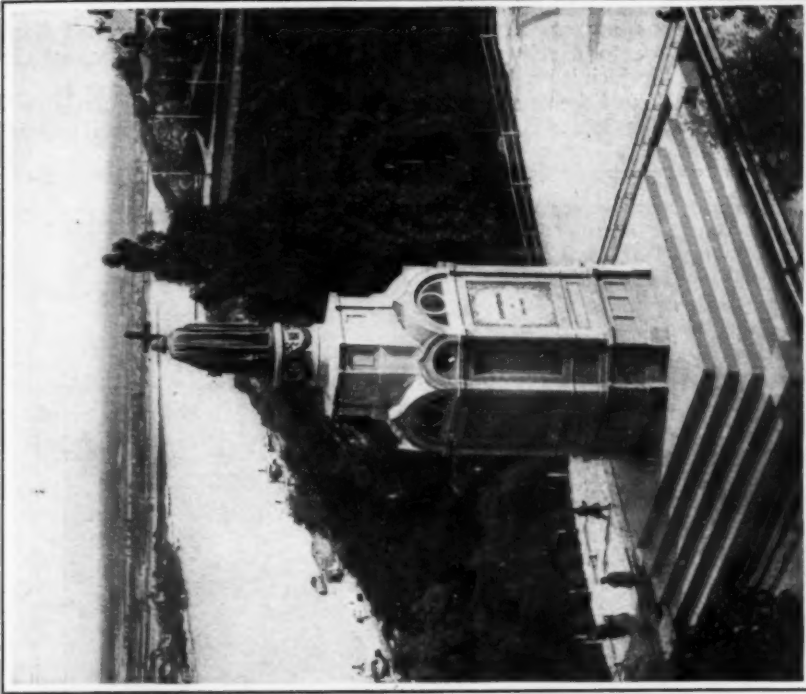
to a position of dominance in Russia was synchronous with the liberation of the country from the rule of the Mongols. It was in 1263 that Moscow became a capital with a permanent princely house, although the real founder of the principality was Daniel Alexandrovitch, who lived forty years later.

For a number of reasons the principality flourished from the outset. The city of Moscow was situated strategically in relation to both land and water routes of trade. The population of the region was comparatively dense and prosperous, and the princes early adopted a course of policy toward both their Russian neighbors and the Mongol overlords which brought them large accessions of strength.

By war and by Machiavellian diplomacy

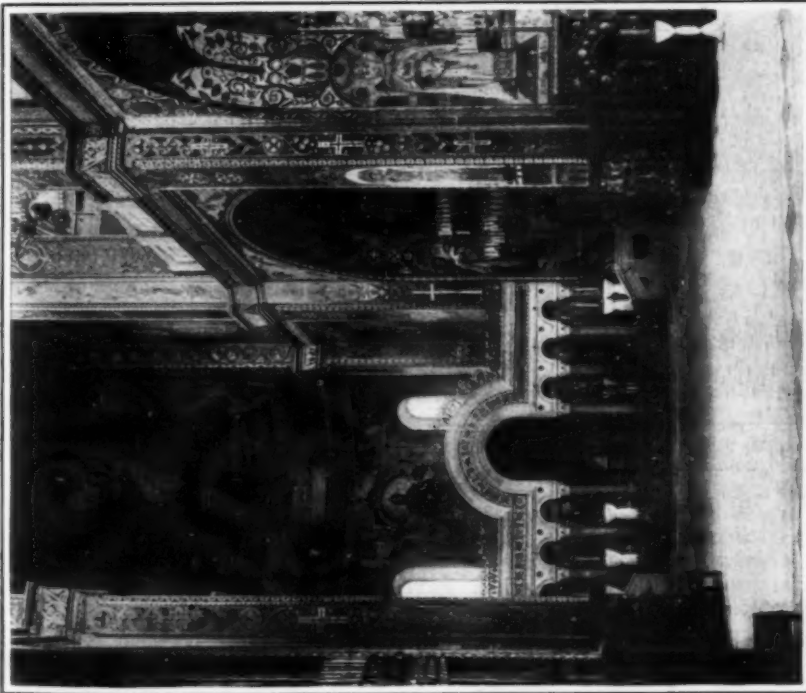
the Mongol rule, as their brother princes were prone to do, they craftily got themselves commissioned as agents of the khan, both for the collection of tribute and for the raising of troops; and in 1353 they were rewarded by receiving from the Mongol potentate the title of grand duke and a grant of jurisdiction over all other princes of the country. No expedient of violence or cunning was left unused to strengthen their hold.

Eventually the Muscovite princes felt strong enough to turn against the now decrepit power that had befriended them—the Mongol khanate. In 1380 Prince Dimitri Ivanovitch, sovereign of practically the whole of northern Russia, inflicted upon the Mongols, on the banks of the Don, the first defeat which they had suffered at Rus-



THE VLADIMIR MONUMENT, ON A HILL ABOVE THE RIVER DNEIPER, AT KIEV.—
THIS COMMEMORATES ST. VLADIMIR, PRINCE OF KIEV (980-1015),
THE FIRST CHRISTIAN SOVEREIGN OF RUSSIA

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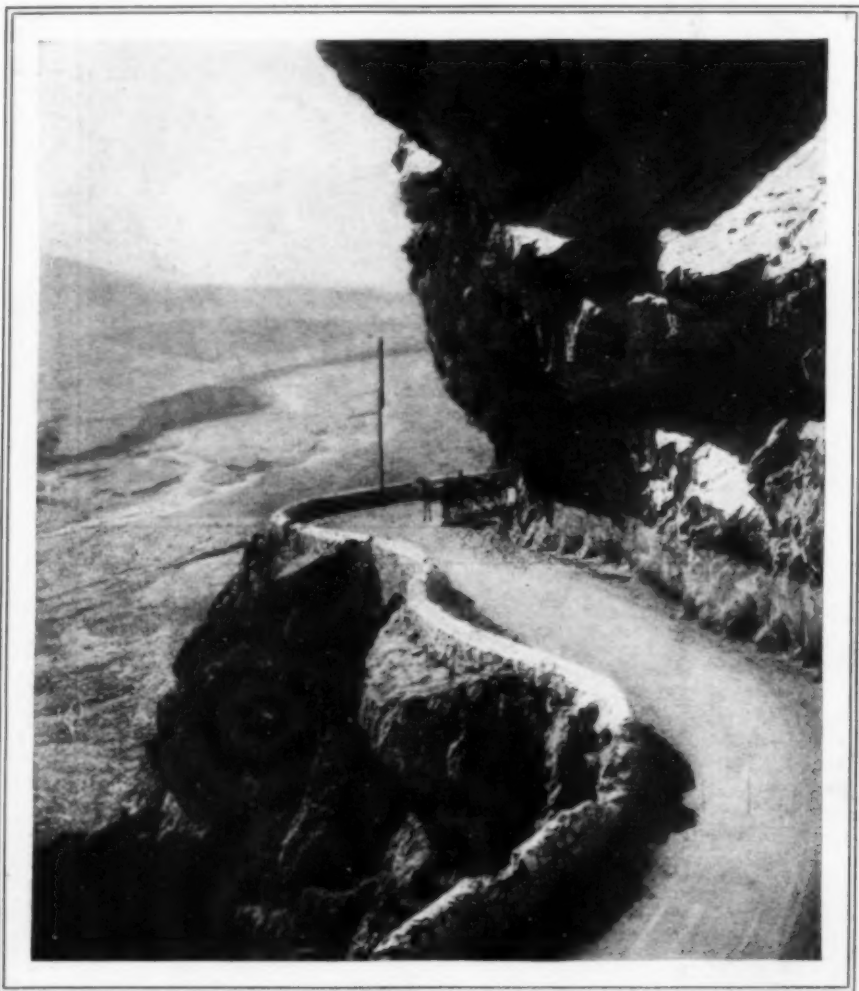
INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. VLADIMIR, ONE OF THE MANY LARGE
CHURCHES OF KIEV, THE HISTORIC CITY WHICH IS KNOWN AS
"THE MOTHER OF ALL RUSSIAN TOWNS"

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sian hands; and although the Mongol power was by no means broken, never thereafter did it threaten to engulf the Russian world. The hold which it retained upon the southern portions of the country was gradually relaxed as the Golden Horde,

trator, the people's defender, and — since the seat of the metropolitan had been transferred thither—the eldest son of the church.

During the century and a quarter covered by the reigns of three powerful princes,



THE GRUZINIAN MILITARY ROAD, WHICH CROSSES THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS FROM VLADIKAVKAZ TO TIFLIS, REACHING A HEIGHT OF NEARLY EIGHT THOUSAND FEET, AND COMMANDING MAGNIFICENT VIEWS

in the next hundred years, dissolved into petty and powerless khanates.

Meanwhile, the princes of Moscow had acquired the advantage of leadership in a great national cause. Moscow became the recognized center of the country; its prince, the strongest ruler, the ablest adminis-

Ivan III, his son Basil III, and his grandson Ivan IV (1462-1584), the policies which had been inaugurated were carried to their logical conclusion. The few principalities that had remained independent were absorbed, and the long and desperate struggle with the neighboring

Slavic kingdoms, Poland, Lithuania, and the rest, was begun. The last traces of Mongol authority were obliterated, and unlimited monarchical power was established.

Ivan III married a niece of the Emperor Constantine Paleologus, who had perished at the capture of his capital by the Turks in 1453. The autocratic tendencies of his rule, already encouraged by the church, were powerfully reenforced by Byzantine influences. The prince ceased to be *primus inter pares* among people of princely rank; he became "the Lord's anointed," who shut himself off from even the nobility, surrounded himself with pomp and luxury, and took on the character of an Oriental Sultan. The people murmured and the nobles protested, but in vain.

Finally, in 1547, when the seventeen-year-old Ivan IV—Ivan (John) the Terrible—was being crowned, he compelled the metropolitan to crown him, not as Grand Prince of Muscovy, but as Czar of Russia. From time immemorial the term czar—a contraction of Caesar—had been applied in Russia to the Biblical kings and to the Byzantine emperors; but never before had it been applied officially to a prince of Russia, although Ivan III, in his treaties, had used an equivalent of it. Its adoption marks the final triumph of the autocratic principle.

Ivan the Terrible is a sinister figure. He is one of several monarchs of Russia who began with good intentions and ended by becoming a monster of cruelty. Perhaps it would be fairer to style him, as a recent writer on Russian history has done, Ivan the Terrified. For it was his inborn timidity, increased to nervous terror, and assuming almost the proportions of a disease, that explains the explosive excitability, the mysticism, and the unrelieved barbarity so characteristic of his later life.

Notwithstanding his glaring faults, he really had the welfare of his people at heart, and was not unpopular. He conceived and partially realized the plan of a "democratic autocracy," aiming at the promotion of the public interest. No less enlightened a successor than Peter the Great testified that he took Ivan for an example in civil and military administration.

Among Ivan's more notable measures were the partial destruction of the hitherto powerful aristocratic class of boyars, the completion of the subjugation of Novgorod,

and the annexation of the Mongol khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan. He also waged a series of unsuccessful wars, following up the efforts of his grandfather to acquire territory on the west at the expense of Lithuania, Poland, and the Swedes, and with it the advantage for which Peter the Great labored in subsequent years—an outlet to the Baltic.

This advantage was destined not to be realized until another century should have elapsed; but during Ivan's reign commercial relations were established with England. Following the visit of an English sea-captain, Richard Chancellor, to Moscow, an envoy from Queen Mary concluded with the Czar a convention stipulating mutual freedom of trade between the two countries.

The death of Ivan (1584) was followed by a period designated in Russian histories as the Time of Trouble—a period, as one writer has characterized it, "which is like a series of Elizabethan chronicle plays, and which contains trenchant characters, scenes and episodes of tragic intensity, glowing with color, dabbled with blood, loud with turmoil and fighting, like those of a tragedy by Marlowe."

The Time of Trouble began, strictly, in 1598, upon the death of Ivan's weak son and successor Feodor, with whom ended forever the dynasty of the Ruriks, and it lasted fifteen years. After Feodor, a brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, who for years had been the power behind the throne, was elected Czar by a national assembly. But a rival claimant appeared, insurrection became wide-spread; and in 1605 Boris died, probably poisoned.

The rival claimant, reputed to be Feodor's brother Dimitri, but unquestionably an impostor, became Czar; and within a year he was assassinated. Matters went from bad to worse. Pretenders arose on every side, centralized authority disappeared, and at one time the country narrowly escaped becoming a dependency of Poland.

But since the rise of the Moscow principate Russia had gained enormously in national consciousness, and at the very moment when utter dissolution seemed inevitable there swept over the country a wave of patriotism and of revulsion against Polish, Lithuanian, or other foreign domination. First the land was cleared of its in-

vaders, and then, toward the close of 1612, the boyars and clergy came to the wise decision to arrange for the election of a Czar by a *zemsky sobor*, or national assembly.

In January, 1613, some five hundred deputies, chosen by the people in fifty towns, and forming by far the most widely representative body ever brought together in Russia prior to the eighteenth century, arrived in Moscow. In the great Cathedral of the Assumption these men—nobles, boyars' sons, officials, soldiers, merchants, and even peasants—took in hand with much earnestness the problem which had been committed to them.

"For many days," writes an annalist of the time, "there were meetings of the men, but they could not settle affairs, and vainly swayed this way and that."

At length, on Sunday, February 21, following three days of fasting and prayer, the assembly elected as sovereign a serious-minded lad fifteen years of age, Michael Feodorovitch Romanoff. The boy was a son of the chief dignitary of the Russian Church, the patriarch Philaret Romanoff, who belonged to a popular boyar family. He was also a nephew of the first wife of Ivan the Terrible. It was understood that for a time the father should govern jointly with the son, and in fact the two ruled together until the patriarch's death in 1633.

The new dynasty was destined to become one of the most powerful and enduring in Europe. The three hundredth anniversary of its accession was celebrated with much acclaim two years ago, and every sovereign of Russia during the centuries since its establishment has been a member of it by birth, save only Catherine II, who was a German.

Under the Romanoffs the distracted and relatively small dominion of Michael has been expanded westward and southward and eastward to the widely separated bounds of the present Russian Empire. Under them the country has multiplied in population many fold, has achieved strong nationality and centralized government, and has pushed its way into the broad current of modern, western civilization.

The rule of the Romanoffs was accepted by all classes of the people, and the country gradually recovered from the effects of the turmoil through which it had passed. Theoretically, the election of Michael involved a fresh assertion of the essentially

popular basis of the state—the elective character of the sovereign power, the limitation of this power by participation of the people in legislation and administration, and its responsibility to the people.

These ideas, familiar enough in the Kiev period of Russian history, had been suppressed or stifled by the practise of Moscow. They were now reasserted, and from the days of Michael and Philaret to those of Nicholas II they could always be appealed to in combating autocracy.

Their rôle in the history of Russia became not unlike that played in England by those conceptions of individual right and liberty which found expression in the Magna Charta, save in one most important respect, namely, that whereas in England the concessions wrung from the king became from an early period real and permanent, in Russia the liberal ideas attending the early rule of the Romanoffs were gradually obscured, until eventually the dynasty became the most autocratic in all Europe. It is only in our own day that Russia is in some measure getting back to the principles of 1613.

The great era in the making of the European Russia of to-day was the eighteenth century, just as the era of the making of Asiatic Russia was the nineteenth. And in the eighteenth century there are two figures which tower above all their contemporaries, Peter the Great (1689-1725) and Catherine II (1762-1796). The one was the ablest of all the Romanoffs; the other, Romanoff only by marriage, takes rank also as one of the most notable monarchs of modern times, and perhaps the most astute, although far from the most admirable, female ruler in the history of continental Europe.

The accession of Peter fell in a period of palace revolutions following the death of his father, Alexis, in 1676; but the trouble was confined to the different branches of the Romanoff family, and it did not affect the hold upon the throne which the family in the past three-quarters of a century had acquired.

Peter the Great is one of the best-known men of history; although one must add that he is perhaps the only Russian sovereign whose personality is really known at all adequately to people of the western world. His predominating mental characteristics were alertness, inquisitiveness,

restless energy, and unwillingness to admit that anything worth doing was impossible. His physical endowment included a powerful frame and capacity to undergo great exertion, although offset by a nervous disorder which in time assumed the character of incurable disease.

His interests were as wide as the earth, but centered upon war and military exercises, ship-building, and the study of the arts and ways of foreign peoples. His was a personality of the most violent contradictions—simple, straightforward, pious, yet passionate, revengeful, cruel, and sensual. All his qualities were on a colossal scale. His rage was cyclonic, his hatred meant extermination.

A contemporary well said of him that he was a very good and a very bad man, and it may be doubted whether any prince equally great has ever descended to such depths of treachery and cruelty. But it is quite possible that his very contradictions fitted him for his times and his tasks. Russia needed a ruler of constructive power and of far-reaching views, while his restless vigor, his disregard of scruples, and his tyrannous ways suited a backward and uncivilized people, accustomed to despotic rule, and demanding a master who would drive them along the path of progress.

In the development of modern Russia, Peter's reign acquires prime importance from two aspects of his policy. One was the acquisition of territory, the consolidation of dominion, and the providing of his country with an outlet to the open sea; the other was the reconstruction of the government, the military system, and the social usages of the land, partly upon western models, partly in sharp reaction against them.

From first to last the foreign policy of the reign had as its principal impetus the Czar's consuming love of the sea. In 1689 Russia had not a single port, save Archangel, on the White Sea; and this, on account of its far northern location, was of use during only a few months of each year. It was the dream of Peter to obtain for his country a footing on the shores of the Caspian, the Black, and the Baltic, and to link up the waters of the Volga, the Don, the Dnieper, and the Neva, which flow into these seas, with a network of canals. Thus Russia would become a great highway of trade and travel between the northwest and

the southeast, and would hold a position that would at last give her an influential standing among the nations of the world.

That the dream was realized only in part was no fault of the dreamer. Attention was directed first toward the southeast, and in 1696, when Peter was as yet but twenty-three years of age, the important territory of Azov, bordering the Black Sea, was wrested from the Turks.

This initial success inspired the laying of broader and bolder plans, which required years for their consummation, and involved not only travel and observation in western countries, but the remodeling of the army, the building of a fleet, and the amassing of money and supplies. When the time for the renewal of action came, the purpose of further conquest in the East had given place to an overmastering desire to acquire land upon the Baltic, and thereby to "open a window" toward western civilization.

As early as 1699 Peter joined the kings of Denmark and Poland in a coalition whose thinly disguised object was the conquest of the Swedish possessions south and east of the Baltic. The eccentric young King of Sweden, Charles XII, performed with unexpected brilliance, and at first defeated the allies roundly one by one; but after a prolonged and desultory contest there was concluded, in 1721, the important Peace of Nystad, by whose terms Peter obtained for Russia not only the districts of Ingria and Karelia, as had been the original intention, but also the important provinces of Livonia and Esthonia and a part of Finland.

In the course of the war Azov was recovered by the Turks, and the planting of Russian sovereignty on the coast of the Black Sea remained to be accomplished by Catherine II; but Peter had given his country a foothold upon the Baltic, and an outlet to the western ocean, which was never lost. He had made it understood that Russia, not Sweden or Poland, was the great northeastern power with which Europe must reckon.

In the course of the celebration of the Peace of Nystad, in 1721, Peter made a further bold bid for aggrandizement for himself and his country by laying aside the title of Czar and proclaiming himself Emperor (Emperor) of all the Russias. The foreign chancelleries were taken by surprise, and were inclined to resent the pre-

sumption involved in the act; but their protests were futile, and the title at length won general recognition. It remains the official designation of the Russian monarch to-day, although he is almost universally spoken of by foreigners as "the Czar."

Meanwhile the program of internal reform, entered upon almost at the beginning of Peter's reign, was being carried into effect as rapidly as circumstances permitted. The obstacles to be overcome were stupendous. Chief among them was the intensely conservative disposition of the masses of the people; and it was in the main to escape the superstitious and fanatical obstructionism which centered in Moscow that the Czar projected and founded the new capital at the mouth of the Neva—the city of "weariness, cold, and granite," as Pushkin called it—to which his name was given.

The construction of the new city, in a region recently taken from Sweden, was begun in 1703. The site was marshy, and the buildings had to be erected on filled earth and supported on piles, so that the amount and difficulty of the labor required was stupendous. Thousands of men from all parts of Russia were employed in the building of the city and of its fortifications, and great numbers died of exposure and harsh treatment. Emigration thither was forced, and shortly after Peter's death the population had risen to one hundred and fifty thousand—a figure which by the close of the eighteenth century was almost doubled.

The embellishments which make the city one of the handsomest in Europe to-day were added principally during the reigns of Alexander I and Nicholas I, in the first half of the nineteenth century. Antedating them, however, is the remarkable bronze statue of the capital's founder which stands in the broad square surrounding the Admiralty. Completed by the French sculptor Falconet in 1782, it represents its subject on horseback, at full gallop, ascending a rocky slope and pointing to the Neva.

The new city was designed, as Peter declared, to serve as a window through which the Russian people might look into Europe, and there can be no question that throughout its existence it has led both in the development of Russian thought and in the naturalizing of western science and philosophy in the country. It has fitly been said

that Petrograd is the head of Russia, while Moscow remains the country's heart.

The model which Peter followed in his reconstruction of Russian society was mainly German, and in a portion of his work he had the assistance of the German philosopher Leibnitz. Like the Japanese in more recent times, however, he did not hesitate to borrow from any source ideas or usages which seemed to him desirable.

The governmental system was overhauled, although with no concession to western principles of liberalism. The army was reorganized and much enlarged. The office of patriarch was abolished, and in its place was set up a Holy Synod presided over by a procurator-general, often a soldier, who was the immediate representative of the head of the state. Taxation was readjusted. Monasticism was restricted. Elementary and technical schools were established, and teachers were brought in from foreign countries. The seclusion of women was discouraged. Western styles of dress were introduced. The wearing of a beard was made a privilege entailing the payment of a special tax.

It must not be supposed that the penetration of Russia by western ideas and habits began only with the measures of Peter. From the court of Poland, dominated alternately by Frenchmen and Italians, some Occidental innovations had already been introduced. Peter's father, the Czar Alexis, had shocked the orthodox of Moscow by appearing occasionally in western dress, just as his wife had caused no end of scandal by failing to conceal her face from the public gaze when she was being borne through the streets of the old capital.

But Peter's acts and measures went vastly beyond anything hitherto dreamed of; and it must be admitted that he used little tact in conciliating public opinion. Not infrequently he wantonly provoked opposition, as when he shaved off his beard and compelled his chief officials to do likewise, although he well enough knew that the performance was regarded by the ignorant masses as a sinful defacing of the image of God.

By some he was declared to be a foreigner in disguise, by others Antichrist; but he persisted to the end, and, although his reforms proved less effective than he hoped, for the reason that human nature and long-

established habits cannot be changed as quickly as can laws or armies, in the aggregate Russia was carried forward an immeasurable distance on the road toward modernization. His whole task, it has been observed, consisted in scratching away the Tatar and setting the inner Russian free.

Following the death of Peter, at the early age of fifty-three, the country passed for almost three-quarters of a century, with the exception of two brief intervals, under the control of women. First came Peter's wife, Catherine; then the daughter of his brother Ivan, Anne, Duchess of Courland, noted for her strong German predilections; then Peter's daughter Elizabeth, proudly Russian, and one of the most engaging of the empresses; and finally the ablest of the group, Catherine II, sometimes called Catherine the Great.

As has been stated, the last Catherine was a native of Germany. As Sophia Augusta Frederica of Anhalt-Zerbst, she was married, in 1745, to a grandson of Peter the Great, Charles Peter Ulrich, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, who, as his name and title indicate, was hardly less German than herself. The Romanoff dynasty had reached the point, indeed, where for the time being there was no possible heir, even in the female line, who could be called a genuine Russian.

Upon the death of Elizabeth, in 1761, the duke became emperor under the name Peter III. From the outset he was intensely unpopular. He was devoid of character and capacity, and he took no pains to conceal his dislike of all things Russian. His wife, on the other hand, deftly turned to advantage her naturally winsome disposition until she fully ingratiated herself with her adopted people. She mastered their language, became a member of their national church, and made herself one of them.

The outcome was inevitable. Within a few months of his accession, in December, 1761, Peter was deposed, and a little later he met his death—accidentally, it was given out, in a brawl. Without delay Catherine was proclaimed sovereign.

Under the energetic administration of this most statesmanlike of European female rulers since Elizabeth of England, Russia entered upon a fresh era of advancement comparable with the period of Peter the Great. The policies and achieve-

ments of the empress attract less attention than do those of her illustrious predecessor, for the reason that there was less about them that was novel or startling; but they were equally ambitious and fruitful.

On the side of foreign affairs, the principal object of the reign was the completion of the work which Peter had begun—the extension of the western and the south-eastern frontiers to the sea, and the raising of Russia to a position of greater influence in the councils of Europe. In both the west and the southeast there were large additions of important territory.

In the west, the unhappy kingdom of Poland was dismembered by the three successive partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795, and the spoils were divided among Russia, Prussia, and Austria, Russia obtaining the lion's share. And in the year of the last Polish partition the Duchy of Courland, cutting off Russia from the Baltic between the mouths of the Niemen and Duna rivers, after being held for decades in tutelage, was formally annexed. By these steps the Russian boundary was pushed westward a distance of three hundred and fifty miles.

In the southeast, a war with the Turks, instigated in 1768 by France, was terminated in 1774 by a treaty which gave Russia a firm hold on the Black Sea. Ten years later the independence of the Mongol khans of the Crimea, recognized in 1774, was extinguished, and the peninsula—destined to become the scene of some famous events in Russian history—was incorporated in the empire.

Catherine conceived a plan to bring about a partition of Turkey similar to that of Poland; but the obstacles were too formidable to be overcome. A second war with the Turks, however, begun in 1787, led to the acquisition of the coastal region between the Bug and the Dniester, containing the great port of Odessa.

At home, Catherine's policies were essentially those of Peter—the opening of the country to western ideas and influences, the reforming of the administrative system, and the rigid maintenance of autocracy. Less stress was placed, however, upon the purely material and utilitarian aspects of national progress. Rather, the effort was to impart to the country some measure of the refinements and ornamental attributes of western, mainly French and German, civilization.

The empress was a professed disciple of Montesquieu, and a friend of Grimm and Voltaire. Early in her reign, when she heard that the publication of the great French "Encyclopédie" was in danger of being stopped by the government of Louis XV, on account of the irreligious spirit of the work, she proposed to Diderot that he should carry his task to completion in Russia under her protection. Her liberalism, however, was purely philosophic and theoretical, and there are reasons for thinking that she always entertained a quiet contempt for the French writers whom, in return for the advertising they gave her in the West, she flattered and pensioned.

At one time she went so far as to convene a national representative assembly; but the powers which the body was permitted to exercise were limited, and in a short while it passed out of existence. And when the Revolution came on in France no one was more assiduous than Catherine in whetting the hostility of the European sovereigns to the democratic movement.

The nineteenth century opened with Russia awaiting an opportunity to take advantage of the Napoleonic wars to solve the Eastern question in a fashion agreeable to herself. The opportunity did not come in Napoleon's time, nor has it ever fully come. Instead, the Czar Alexander I, who in 1801, succeeded Catherine's capricious son Paul, found himself at first, in 1807, drawn into a hollow alliance with the western conqueror, and later, in 1811, forced by circumstances to make war upon him.

The principal result of the Napoleonic alliance was the conquest from Sweden of the extensive territories of Finland and Bothnia. This acquisition, organized as a constitutional grand duchy in 1809, gave the empire substantially the western boundaries which it has since possessed. The outcome of the Czar's turning against Napoleon was the memorable expedition to Moscow in 1812, and the assumption by Russia of leadership in the campaigns of 1813-1814, from which the Napoleonic ascendancy received its finishing blows. The empire emerged from the long struggle enlarged in area and population, increased in prestige, and more nearly the dictator of Europe than any other power.

Since 1815 the main interests of Russian history have been three. One is the increase of territory; a second is the revo-

lutionizing of the country's industrial condition; a third is the development of political liberalism.

Russia has not pushed her frontiers westward during the last hundred years, except that in 1878 she recovered a strip of Bessarabia lost after the Crimean War. She has extended her Caucasian province southward at the expense of Turkey and Persia; but her great expansion has been to the east, and in her Asiatic dominions she has accomplished one of the most remarkable conquering and colonizing achievements in the history of the world. Meanwhile, she has abandoned her outlying possessions in North America, transferring Alaska to the United States in 1867 for seven million dollars in gold—a price which seems paltry in comparison with the present importance of that rich territory.

From the days of the Verangers the Russian Slav has had a bent for pioneering, and in the vast stretches of Siberia he finally found an opportunity to indulge his colonizing proclivities to the utmost. Russian penetration eastward from the Urals began systematically as early as 1581, when the indefatigable Cossack chieftain Yermak headed an unauthorized expedition to Sibir, capital of one of the Asiatic khanates, and captured the place.

In Russian hands Sibir—whence is derived the name Siberia—declined, and eventually disappeared. But the Russian settlement was maintained, and the neighboring city of Tobolsk, founded in 1587, became the permanent outpost of a colonizing movement which has since had for its field the whole vast plain of northern Asia.

Step by step the hardy Cossacks worked their way eastward, building forts and planting settlements, until in 1636 they came upon the only limit to their enterprise which they deigned to recognize—the shore of the Pacific Ocean. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the flag of Russia waved over all the territories of northern and eastern Siberia. It remained to acquire the lands farther south, and especially the fertile and populous valley of the Amur. This was accomplished shortly after the middle of the nineteenth century; and between 1891 and 1902 there was constructed the great Trans-Siberian railway, nearly five thousand miles in length, which cut the time and cost of transportation from Europe to the Pacific to about one-half.

The Russian losses in the Far East in consequence of the war with Japan in 1904-1905 were considerable, but in no way vital. They have had the not undesirable effect of centering the government's attention upon the colonization of the Siberian lands—the Canada of Russia—and during the past decade the number of Russians migrating thither has varied from two hundred thousand to more than six hundred thousand annually. The bad name which Siberia acquired from the exile system was never wholly deserved, and is fast passing.

The economic transformation which Russia has undergone in the past fifty or seventy-five years involves as its principal factors the emancipation of the serfs under Alexander II, the introduction of machinery and of the factory system, the growth of capitalism, the building of railways, the rise of cities, and, in general, the development of those aspects of modern civilization which are associated with the idea of "industrialism." Only in the present generation has Russia really entered that stage of industrial transition through which England passed in the second half of the eighteenth century, France in the second quarter of the nineteenth, and Germany in the third quarter of the nineteenth.

As in economic matters, so in political affairs, Russia is still a country in the making. Despite an earlier tradition of limited monarchy, the nation's present political inheritance is autocracy; and it is too much to expect the weight of that inheritance to be thrown off suddenly, or even rapidly.

During the past hundred years the country has oscillated between absolutism and constitutionalism. Alexander I (1801-1825) began as a liberal, but ended as an absolutist. Nicholas I (1825-1855) was never anything but a thoroughgoing absolutist. Alexander II (1855-1881) was a liberal whose apprehensions narrowly checked him from reform measures transcending even the emancipation of the serfs. Alexander III (1881-1894) was another Nicholas I; and the present Czar was committed unreservedly to the maintenance of autocracy until the exigencies of war and threatened revolution, in 1904-1905, compelled him to make some concession to liberalizing principles.

How, step by step, within the past decade, Russia has achieved a style of gov-

ernment at least nominally constitutional, is a matter of familiar history. There is a written constitution, the first the country ever had, which consists of a series of "organic laws" promulgated in 1906. There is the Council of the Empire, an aristocratic body which serves as an upper chamber of the national legislature; and there is the Imperial Duma, whose members are elected, usually indirectly, by the people.

The history of the nation under the new régime has, however, been stormy. Factional strife and the spirit of reaction have many times imperiled the constitution's very existence. The first two Dumas were short-lived. The third lasted from 1907 to 1912, and the fourth is still in existence.

The new system has hardly fulfilled its earlier promise, and the government of the empire is to-day very far from being democratic, or even wholly constitutional. Yet, measured by the conditions of a century, a generation, or even fifteen years ago, the advance in governmental responsiveness to the will of the nation looms large. The winning of the form of constitutionalism is something, for in time it may lead to the attainment of the reality.

As a factor in shaping the conduct of the affairs of the world at large, Russia declined perceptibly in consequence of her defeat by Japan and her internal disorders of ten years ago. Her army was decimated and her military system discredited; her navy was practically destroyed; and her finances were strained to the last degree. There has been, however, remarkable recovery, which has demonstrated convincingly the empire's reserve strength; and her position among the powers at the outbreak of the present war was one of commanding importance.

Her army had been rehabilitated and enlarged, her fleet had been in a measure rebuilt, her finances had been reduced to order, her diplomacy had lately achieved some of its most notable successes. The alliance with France, which for a quarter of a century has been a capital fact in her international position, was firmly buttressed by both political and financial interests. In 1907 she had signed a convention with Japan guaranteeing the integrity of China and mutual respect for treaty and territorial rights, and in succeeding years the two formerly hostile powers had arrived at a status of genuine friendship.

In 1907, also, the prolonged period of mutual suspicion between Russia and Great Britain was brought to a close by a convention for the amicable adjustment of all questions likely to disturb the relations of the two powers in Asia, including the division of the decrepit state of Persia into "spheres of influence." The ambition to acquire the political and economic dominance of the entire Black Sea basin remained to be gratified, but important steps had been taken to that end.

The effect of the present war upon the Russian position in the world cannot be foreseen in detail; but it is a safe guess that, whatever happens, the Muscovite empire will be saved by her immensity, her immobility, and her reserve strength from suffering a setback more serious than that from which she so speedily recovered after the war with Japan. Defeat can mean no serious loss of territory or impairment of resources; victory would probably mean accessions, and perhaps very important accessions, to both.

Politically, Russia is one of the great enduring facts of the modern world. Culturally, her rôle has been, and is, likewise of fundamental importance.

As Dante among the great men of history, so Russia among the great nations has been the Janus-faced. Her outlook has ever been in two quite opposite directions. All the troubles and sufferings and miserable discords which run through the life of her people, no less than their achievements and their victories, are the consequences of the intermediate position between East and West which fate has decreed that the nation shall occupy.

Europe and Asia still carry on their age-long quarrel within the empire's confines; the imperial emblem, the two-headed eagle, remains a fitting symbol of the nation's dual character. First it was Asia that overflowed Europe; latterly it is Europe which has overflowed Asia.

Russia's rôle in civilization has been to preserve an equilibrium between those forces which are distinctively eastern and those which are distinctively western, and her greatest geniuses have ever reconciled in themselves eastern and western tendencies. As it was with Peter the Great in the sphere of statecraft, so it was with Pushkin in that of poetry, with Solovieff in that of philosophy, and with Tolstoy in that of religion and morals.

But it is important to observe that, at least since the period of Peter the Great, the whole aspiration of Russia in matters of culture has been toward Europe, not Asia. Russia is a Christian nation. Her administrative and economic reforms are planned and executed on Western lines. Her science is the science of France and Germany, and her art, whether sculpture, painting, poetry, or music, is being assimilated ever more completely to European forms and standards of esthetics. No important political, social, or intellectual movement in the West is without its reflection in Russia.

And, even if Russia were several times more Oriental than she is, it would hardly be gracious of peoples situated farther west to taunt her with her un-European character, seeing that through all the centuries she has served them as a protecting buffer against Asiatic invasion and domination.

THE LOST WORD

THERE was in my heart to-day
 Something exquisite to say,
 Fluttering like a darkling bird,
 Vainly trying to be heard,
 Stirring like a prisoned rose,
 Like a waif of music strayed
 In corridors where no one goes.

All life's sweetness past the telling
 Seemed within my heart upwelling,
 Softly suing to be said
 In one lonely, perfect word;
 Yet in vain I tried to free
 What my heart would say to me.

Richard Le Gallienne

THE DEVIL'S ARITHMETIC

BY MARY HEATON VORSE



YOUTH had dropped into Charles Morton's lap like a gift from the gods. As he thought over what had happened, he felt at that dizzy height where the wisdom of age and the power of youth were both miraculously his.

He had gone out that evening Charles Morton, the successful inventor, forty-seven years old, father of two grown children, good husband, steady citizen. He had gone out tired, burdened with the memory of much work and the anticipation of still more work. Between one moment and the next he had found that the person he had supposed to be Charles Morton was only the shell of a man, made up in part of what other people expected him to be, and in part evoked by his various responsibilities. The real Charles Morton had lived buried inside this shell, and between one moment and the next he broke through it and stepped out.

Morton had known this other self well, but believed him to have died in his youth; and now, behold, he was so keenly alive that Morton wondered that he could have slept as he had without letting anything be heard from him for so many years, while the other Morton was toiling monotonously.

When Ellingsworth had wanted to go, after the theater, to a great café where there was dancing, the suggestion bored Morton.

"I'm not interested," he said, "in the dancing madness."

"Madness?" Ellingsworth echoed. "Yes, that's what it is! It's the madness of joy and the madness of youth; all the things that make life worth living intensified and gone a little mad."

"They're not the things that make life worth living."

"What *does* make your life worth living?" Ellingsworth challenged him.

They were a gray-haired, sober lot of

joys that constituted the sum of satisfaction in Morton's career, the principal thing being the chase of a new idea and the triumph of seeing it made incarnate in a new invention. The human relations of his life had consisted in mingling with men of his own kind; this, and a placid home existence had rounded out his contract with his fellows.

He thought of himself as fortunate and happy; he had been conscious of no lack.

At Ellingsworth's question the essence of all these satisfactory things rose in Morton's mind. Life as his imagination evoked it was a pleasant place. So he replied:

"Why, everything makes my life worth living, you old idiot! Do you think I need to go to a cabaret show every night to have a satisfactory life? I've never felt the need of the beastly things!"

"Then come!" Ellingsworth smiled at him. "Come with an open mind, and be amused at my amusement, even if you won't be amused on your own account. It can't hurt your life to open it to a new sensation. Come with an open mind, you old stick-in-the-mud! Don't come with a blasé air!" Ellingsworth looked at him quite compassionately. "This is new to you, you say, all this mania of dancing, and all the life that has grown up around it in the last three years? You have just heard of it in the Sunday papers? Wonderful! I wish I were you!"

"Why?" Morton asked, for the sake of saying something.

"Because, if I had your virgin mind, I should pretend that I was a boy new to the city. I should open my mind wide, as a boy would, and let the sights and sounds of life play through me. It's really quite wonderful if you let it do so. You discover and invent; why don't you discover yourself? That's the trouble with us as we grow older. We take ourselves for granted, instead of sounding the new possibilities the

years have given us. You see, here's the difference between us—I'm an experimenter in human nature, and you are an experimenter in machines. I couldn't change places with you; I wonder if it would be as hard for you to change places with me?"

"I'll make a trial of it, to please you," said Morton.

Some subconscious self had been listening to the voices of Broadway, and looking at the sights its after-theater crowd presented. The crowded, noisy wonder of it stimulated him.

"Some day," he found himself saying, "we'll find a way of using the current that all these people create. It gets you, it sweeps you along like electricity!"

II

THEY were inside the restaurant by now, and there it seemed as if all the unharnessed excitement in the air had been concentrated. Rhythm, the oldest and most compelling of the arts, rhythm that still broods over primitive lands, that sends men mad and sends them into battle, or sets them rejoicing madly after the slaughter of wild beasts! Rhythm that still controls all the countries of the Orient, that for a while let the Western nations be, only to turn on them again, timing their heart-beats to its own throbbing!

City dweller though he was, Morton had never seen a group of people under its dominion before. With growing curiosity he watched men as old as himself, or older; dancing with the somewhat terrible gaiety of those who know the passions that lie beneath the surface of gaiety. The music and the madness combined to call to him. He looked at the people with a certain wistfulness, with an unvoiced wish that he could feel their abandon.

There was one girl in particular who danced with a passion of youth and joy, and who, as she swayed and moved, let the world look into her heart. After once seeing her dancing like that, Morton thought it would not matter how she talked, for any one who had seen her dance would know the fire that burned in the depths of her. She was small and rounded, the embodiment of youth and fire, and very innocent with it all, with her naive self-revelation.

She let life flow through her, as Ellingsworth had told Morton to do. She could not do anything else. One felt that that

was the way she always lived, in harmony with the mighty, pulsing current of life, instead of letting little, commonplace interests take her at cross purposes into fancied duties.

What a force to use, Morton reflected! Then it flashed across him how much more beautiful it was to let this force live, a law to itself, not in harness to any use except the use of living.

As he watched the girl dance, there came up in his mind a wordless desire to dance with her. Her partner, a tall, blond youth, seemed for a moment to partake of her fire of life as they moved together in the syncopated rhythm. It flashed through Morton's mind that to dance with her once would be to know her more fundamentally than in a week of speech.

At this moment Ellingsworth, who had been sitting opposite Morton, looking in a different direction, swung abruptly around, his eyes drawn by Morton's glance.

"Why," he exclaimed, "there are Phoebe Grayson and her aunt sitting at a table! And there are Hollis and Mac! They want us to join them—come on!"

In a moment Morton was shaking hands with the girl. She turned eyes that were both shy and ardent, the flame of the dance still in them, on Ellingsworth.

"Is it *the* Charles Morton?" she asked shyly.

For the first time in his life being recognized as "*the*" Charles Morton gave him acute pleasure, but made him humble, too. It seemed impossible that this vivid, living, pulsing thing should have stopped her flight long enough to have heard of anything so dull and practical as himself and his work. He sat down.

There had been a meaning to his work greater than he had suspected, since this girl already knew him. In the past half-hour his work and his whole life had sunk into a gray, insignificant background, but now, all at once, it had meaning again. The difference in years between the girl and himself seemed to have been wiped out. It did not occur to him that the disparity of age was probably as great as between himself and his daughter.

She refused to dance the next dance, her warm eyes on Morton.

"I'd rather talk with you," she said. "I've always wanted to meet you."

"And I you," Morton found himself saying.

"Me?" Her eyes opened with surprise and pleasure. Then she added wistfully: "Are you saying that just to be agreeable? Please don't." She was very much in earnest and very sincere.

"Indeed I'm not," Morton went on. "When I saw you dancing I felt I would rather dance with you than anything else in the world; and then I saw how much more fitting it was that you should be dancing with a young fellow."

"I've never cared for boys," she put in impulsively. "I like *men*."

"Much more fitting," he went on steadily, "for youth to seek youth." The protest in her eyes gave him courage to add, in order that he might be contradicted: "I'm old, you know."

Her laugh was like a peal of bells. She was honestly surprised.

"Old? You! Do you know what you are! *You're just right!* You know things, and you've done things. Why, you have everything!"

It seemed to Morton that he had. The hand of time had rolled back the years; he was young again. He always had been young.

Their eyes were on each other. Instinctively they moved their chairs nearer together, instinctively Morton's hand went out toward her hand as it lay relaxed on the table, with two fingers round the stem of a glass. As they talked, the inner man and woman who dwell deep in us, who know no laws and recognize no ties except the irresistible urge of man and woman toward one another, were speaking wordlessly.

"You please me better than any other man I know," she was saying. "All these mean nothing to me. Among thousands I would have come to you."

"You have taught me again the mystery and the beauty of the flesh that I had forgotten," he was replying. "You have brought me back to life—me, who have been sleeping my life through."

Meantime Phoebe's voice was saying with scorn:

"Little young men! These days they're simply legs that dance. I hardly notice their faces, except as a sort of trade-mark to tell me which has the best pair of feet."

And then Morton knew that what he had felt under admiration for her dancing was pain, the sharp and sudden pain of loss and jealousy. Now, each word that she spoke turned his pain into a flaming joy. His

old life still hung around him too much for him to acknowledge to himself that he knew what she had told him in that blind and voiceless way in which men and women talk to each other in spite of years, in spite of conventions, in spite of a thousand ties to keep them apart—"I have chosen you!"

Phoebe confided to him that a girl gets tired of dancing, and wants more of life than to be bored between dances. Life was what she wanted, and life was what she made other people want—more and more of life in its dazzling wholeness.

Just as she declared that she was tired of dancing, a new rhythm struck up.

"Come," she said. "You can learn this in no time."

She rose to her feet and put out her hand—a hand that said:

"Come! I must touch your hand."

As a young man Morton had danced well. To-night his mood and his own knowledge, the music and this matchless girl with shy, tender, impassioned eyes, wrought a miracle in him.

"Why," she gasped at him, "you do dance! I never felt so wing-heeled!"

That was the word for it. So they went on through the evening, their voices ever more closely approximating the things that their spirits were anxiously saying to one another. And then Morton found himself asking the inevitable question:

"When am I going to see you again?"

Nothing in life seemed quite so important as that, though he would not have admitted it. He was still ignorant of the full importance of what had happened to him, although he knew it was important enough. He knew he had sloughed off years and years of his life, and he said happily to Ellingsworth, as they went along:

"Well, you see, I did what you told me to—I let life flow through me!"

Ellingsworth nodded rather gravely.

"Yes," he said, as he nodded, and again: "Yes," in strong corroboration.

III

THEY were to see each other on the following night, at the opera, to which Morton was going with his wife. Their box was a little way from hers. She wore a flame-colored garment which matched her inner spirit, but which seemed a strange choice for the demure little body she appeared to be, as she sat there so quietly, her deep eyes on the stage.

Between the acts Morton sought her out. "I want you to meet my wife," he said to her. His mouth was still saying the conventional things.

She had known, of course, that he was married. Pictures of himself and his family had appeared among the celebrities in the Sunday newspapers.

She followed his glance to his wife.

"Oh!" she said in a little startled voice.

"What?" he asked her.

"I didn't think your wife would look like that!" she replied impulsively and absurdly.

"What did you think she would look like?" he said, smiling.

"I thought she'd look like a splendid princess. She looks perfectly sweet," she hastened on; "she looks like my mother."

What Phoebe meant was that Mrs. Morton looked old to her; and he knew it. He changed the subject.

Within the next few days he began to wonder what had become of his wife's husband—a staid, middle-aged man without emotion, a man who seemed to have very little in common with his present self, an uninteresting, *Gradgrind* sort of fellow. They had jogged along together, good friends. Up to a few days ago he had been perfectly contented. Now it was with a sort of shudder that he looked at such a marriage.

After all, he thought, that was the way he had lived for many years, and that was the way he could continue to live; but he could also enter into a different sort of existence. And just here his wife gave him ample opportunity to take up the other life, the life demanded by his new-found youth. She went away suddenly to spend a month with their married daughter.

Morton's daughter was a handsome, sensible girl who had married a handsome, sensible young fellow the preceding year. His son was still in college.

He saw his wife off with a shade of tender but unconscious gratitude in his manner. His thoughts were not with her at all, but were dwelling wordless in the new passion for life that had come to him.

As his wife said good-by, she looked at him gravely, more like an anxious mother than like a wife. There was a tinge of solemnity, almost of finality, in her manner as she kissed him.

While all this was passing below the limit of consciousness in Morton's mind, be-

low the limit of words in her own mind was forming the determination that he could take everything from her, but not the peace of her soul.

Having said good-by to his wife, he turned away and followed life. He went forward to it with the confidence of a boy, fearing nothing, not looking where it would lead. If any one had asked him at that moment, he would have said that it could lead nowhere. Surely there was no harm in what he was doing. It was good for him, and he was good for Phoebe. He was entirely confident of his own virtue.

Hand in hand they went from the ardent friendship with which they had begun into still more enchanted lands of love unconfessed. They blinded their eyes to what was coming, like any boy and girl, too much absorbed in the present moment to foresee disaster.

Now Morton danced like the men whom he had watched on the night when he first saw Phoebe, with a terrible gaiety, snatching at every moment of pleasure as if it were his last on earth.

Meanwhile the blind and voiceless selves that we all carry within us were becoming more and more insistent; their voices were louder and louder. Though Morton had never thought a step ahead, it seemed the most natural thing in the world that one evening, as he took her home in his car, he found his arms around her and his mouth on hers. Her arms were about his neck and he was passionately telling her that he loved her. It seemed as if all his life he had waited for this moment. It was as natural a sequence of events as the plighting of troth of young lovers.

Their embrace lasted for a few minutes of heaven-sent oblivion, and then Phoebe shivered away from him and hid her face in her hands, sobbing to herself, and breathing out "Oh!" and again "Oh!" like a child whose heart has been broken.

He tried to comfort her, but without avail. Within the same half-hour he tasted the joy of possession and the anguish of renunciation. Fate had put the cup to his lips and snatched it and broken it, and had broken him, too.

He knew, as he went home, that this flower which had blossomed in his life so late was like some of those flowers of the autumn that last late into the frosts, and die after all other green things have died. So it would be with Morton. This flower

that had bloomed so late would only die when he died.

Desire for Phœbe and the loss of her assailed him night and day. In that one moment of fulfilment and desperate love, when they had clung together, and when she had wept in his arms like a lost child, they had promised each other that they must not meet again.

IV

MORTON had not dreaded his wife's return. Nothing could make him any more wretched, he felt; but suddenly and unexpectedly he found her presence intolerable to him. There she was before him, the living barrier between him and his heart's desire.

Before she came back he had felt tenderly toward her, almost sorry for her, since they were now so far apart who had once been so close together. Now she seemed the most alien thing in all the world; no stranger but seemed nearer to him than she. It was as if the man who had been her husband was dead and a resentful newcomer wore his body.

He remained more and more in his work-rooms, pleading stress of work. He remained there to read and reread every item that appeared in the newspapers where the name of Phœbe might be found. He learned that she was week-ending here; that she had been at a ball there; that she had poured tea at another place.

Life went on for her, he thought. He remembered her youth and her eagerness for joy, and jealousy, like a blighting sickness, overwhelmed him. Every hour of the day and night he saw her with other people, her warm, innocent, tender eyes looking at other men as she had looked at him.

"We must do our best to forget each other," she had said.

Morton spent his days and nights in imagining what means she was taking to accomplish this. The very soul was torn out of his body in the daily conflict between his desire to go to her and the necessity he felt of keeping out of her life, as he had promised.

How ravaged it had left him he saw one day reflected in Phœbe's face, when they met by chance. The innocent joyfulness had gone from it, seemingly forever. All her quality had heightened through the strain under which she had lived. She was lovelier than ever since passion and pain

had had their way with her. They stopped. For a moment they could not speak.

"Oh, my dear," she breathed finally, "Oh, my dear, has it been as bad as that?"

He had no words, he who was usually fluent enough.

"Yes," was all that he could say.

Without speaking, they turned into a hotel where they could have tea together. Phœbe sank down on her seat with a little "Oh!" of satisfaction, as touching as the sigh of a child who has sobbed and sobbed alone in the dark until finally its mother's arms are around it. Then she said:

"This can't go on."

Still he only looked at her, resting himself, after his long pain and self-denial, just by being with her.

"I was coming to you," she went on. "I have fought as long as I can, and now the things I was fighting seem unimportant. I don't know even why I left you."

So they sat for a while in that exquisite oblivion of all else which only two people who care for each other deeply can feel. There was nothing else in the world; all the reasons they had had for parting seemed mere inventions of a strange and alien society.

Only the thought of his wife hurt Morton; the habit of long loyalty was still upon him. How to tell her? By what words could he make her understand? But after all that was a trifle. He was content to enjoy the happiness of the moment.

V

HE found it less difficult than he had feared. His wife sat quiet and listened.

"I have known for a long time that there was something," she said. "I hoped it would pass by. Men at your age—" Her voice trailed off into silence.

He could not bear to hear his love and Phœbe's compared with the usual absurd exhibitions that men make of themselves in middle life. He put up a protesting hand, but did not speak. He turned to the window and looked out.

"It just happened," he said. "We tried hard."

He knew that slow and difficult tears were falling down her face. He knew, too, that she did not wish him to see her cry. She had always hated it. He waited a while.

"We both tried hard," he repeated.

"Have you tried long enough? Are you sure?" she asked him. Her voice was clear,

but still he knew that tears rolled down her cheeks. "Sure that it's real, I mean?"

He turned and faced her, and she saw the havoc that these months of waiting and denial had meant to him. His glance seemed to ask her:

"Of course a man may tear his heart out, but of what use is the mangled creature that's left to any woman?"

"I've not been very close to you for a long time," he said. "I can't mean much to you; I can never mean what this means."

She thought it over a while.

"No," she said.

Her voice quivered. He was mutely grateful that she did not reproach him, that she believed in him enough to know that this had come in spite of himself, not from mere wantonness. He would have liked to kiss her kindly.

The wrench had come easier than he had expected, and yet it had its peculiar and exhausting quality.

VI

MORTON sat on the terrace of a hotel overlooking the sea at Sorrento. Opposite him sat Phœbe. Her gaze traveled over the finished loveliness of the scene, and occasionally rested speculatively on the people who passed in front of her eyes.

Sorrento, when the roses are in bloom, is a place made for lovers. In Venice, love moves silently, a finger on its lips, and pours out its passion under the stars. Sorrento bares its bosom to the day.

Charles Morton thought there was too much invitation in everything; too heavy a perfume of roses—so many roses that it was like the back-drop of some great "production." The sea was too blue, the air too soft, there were too many orange-groves. His mind reverted to the cool, slow-creeping springs of his boyhood, where there were no more obtrusive flowers than the trailing arbutus, and those one must seek for.

The thought of arbutus brought to his mind his first wife. He thought of her with that far-off aloofness, that casual tenderness, which one bestows upon a person once dear but dead a long time. The storms of the past two and a half years had seemed to cut him off from the long, continuous stretch of his earlier life.

There had been the year preceding his divorce, his meetings with Phœbe—meetings unsatisfactory yet heartrendingly sweet, full of desire, leaving him forever

famished for more sight of her. Then came the noise of his divorce, the noise of the fight with her family, her passionate championing of him and of their love, then their marriage after an interval barely decent.

These two years and a half had racked him, rent him, torn him. He had wanted life. Well, he had had it in all its phases—suspense, excitement, love.

It was the desperation of those heart-racking days of stress and doubt that marked the highest moment of their love—the desperate and fearful happiness of their meetings, their clinging and impassioned kisses before they said their desperate good-byes, not knowing when they might again see each other.

She had never coquetted with him, or tried to screen from him the flame of her passion. Coquetries, she herself had said, were as much out of place with them as they would have been on the eve of the deluge. He had looked into the flaming intensity of her heart as he had never looked into the heart of another woman.

During the first few weeks of their marriage they clung to each other desperately, scarcely able to believe that it was true. They were perpetually afraid lest something might separate them. As time had proved that it was true, the tension of life relaxed, and from the high places they had imperceptibly slipped down-hill. After eight months of marriage, life held a certain slackness. Morton had begun to feel that Phœbe was perpetually looking for something from life and from their union that she could not find, as if she had expected more and ever more of their marriage, as if she had thought that their beautiful desperation could have become transmuted into some high, poignant, impossibly intense happiness.

Ever more and more she gave him this sense of being disappointed, as if she were searching and searching for something she never found.

"Are you disappointed in our love? Are you disappointed in me?" he wanted to ask her; but, in the face of her ardor, he could not put such questions.

This morning on the terrace he sat facing a party which consisted of two girls and an older woman. The young people were evidently Americans, charmingly dressed, eager, prattling creatures, with the long-limbed beauty of Anglo-Saxon girls, and the clear delicacy which we like to regard

as the type of our national beauty. Their young voices and their gushing enthusiasm made him feel as if he were in the presence of a nest of chickens.

Phoebe, attracted by their sweet chirping, turned her head, and at the same moment sprang to her feet. In an instant they were kissing one another and chattering together. He was introduced to two of Phoebe's school friends. She hopped up and down and clapped her hands like a child over the chance encounter.

He saw, by the rather awed interest with which the young girls regarded him, that they looked upon him as a hero of romance. There was a little touch of this, too, in the attitude of the older woman—their mother, but still handsome and comparatively youthful-looking.

Phoebe's eager gaze, as if she were forever searching for something she could not find, had vanished. For a moment she was just a young girl again, with that added, enhancing touch which the knowledge of passion so surely gives.

"They're going to Capri this afternoon. We can go, too, can't we?" she begged him, with the assurance of a petted bride.

"Of course we can go," he answered easily, but his heart went cold within him.

Capri, as she very well knew, was to have been the crowning moment of this journey. They had come down from Germany, where they had spent the winter, to see Sorrento at its highest glory, and from Sorrento they were to go to Capri.

"They're going to meet the boys in Capri," she gave out, "Tenny Neville and Tom." She linked an arm with an arm of each one of the girls. "We're going away to talk secrets," she proclaimed. "Oh, I feel so wing-heeled!"

That little, unconscious phrase of hers was like the stab of a knife to Morton. She had not felt wing-heeled with him—for how long was it?

VII

MORTON, meanwhile, was making polite conversation with the girls' mother—a woman of his own age, the devil's arithmetic made him tell himself. The devil's arithmetic went on implacably! Phoebe was twenty-four. He was forty-nine—twenty-five years older!

When she was thirty-four, he would be fifty-nine. He had done this sum times enough before, at first with the triumph of

a man who has arrested the hand of time. Later, it had seemed a joke that he should be old enough to be her father. Now it was the devil's sum. He looked at it as might a man who for the first time adds up figures whose total makes him irretrievably bankrupt.

All that night, at Capri, the sum did itself over for him with maddening insistence. The day had left him spent; he was tired; he wanted quiet; he wanted to go to bed. If Sorrento had seemed like the back-drop of a theater, the little island of his dreams was all set for a comic opera—the little esplanade full of Germans, the strange, narrow streets and archways were like nothing in real life.

But Phoebe had never been so happy. She was like a radiant little girl let out of school, he thought. The "boys"—old friends—looked at her with speculative eyes. Men who met her for the first time saw in her some new and alluring flame.

They went to a tourists' restaurant, he the only weary one. His contemporary, the girls' mother, seemed as eager as they for the novelty of the crowded, clattering place, the singing Italians, the girl who danced the tarantella.

Phoebe watched the dancing girl with absorbed intensity.

"Oh, I'd love to dance!" she sighed. "It's so long since I've danced. How long is it since we danced?" she said, turning to Morton.

"I've had a letter from Jessica," one of the girls told her. "They're in Paris—every one's dancing there. We're going to join them. We're going right up from here, you know."

"Oh!" cried Phoebe, "can't we go, too? Oh, Paris—Paris in the spring—and dancing!" It was a cry that came from her heart.

"You'd rather do that than follow the spring up to Venice, as we planned?" Morton asked.

That was what they had planned together through the long year of waiting—to go and live quietly in Germany in a place he knew of, to come down to Sorrento, and then to follow the spring northward. They had gone over each detail a thousand times; but she seemed to have forgotten.

"Oh, Paris and dancing!" she cried. "Let's do that!"

She put her hand caressingly on his arm, sure of her power.

On the journey north she had never loved him more. Her mouth turned always to his for kisses; she had a trick of standing unconsciously close to him, her head tilted back, her lips ever so slightly parted. And yet, through this time, Morton had the fantastic feeling that it was not his kisses she wanted, but kisses; not his love, but love. Youth she wanted, and life, and ever more life; and she wanted, too, to drink deeply of the passion that goes with youth.

She chattered with her friends in irresponsible happiness. They went to the same hotel; they met other friends, and made plans to go to a smart place where they could dance.

Morton found himself inexpressibly tired. He had caught cold. They dined alone, and during dinner his weariness grew more intense. When they went to their room, Phœbe set about dressing, while he looked out of the window, a dark silhouette of fatigue.

"Aren't you going to dress?" she asked him. She touched him with eager, tender hands. Their glances met. "You don't want to go?" she said.

She was like a never-quenched fire, now leaping up with new fuel, now glowing less brightly, but always with a heart of flame. But now it was as if the fire of her had been smothered with wet grass, and the flames obscured by a pall of smoke.

"Why do you go, darling," said she, "if you don't want to? I can go with the girls and their mother. We'll be home early. It's only just for a moment. Just one dance—like this!"

She hummed a tune of one of the newer dances—Heaven knows how she had caught it in the few hours since their arrival in Paris—and balanced and teetered with lilt-ing grace across the floor.

"All right," he said, with curious and somber eyes fixed on her. "I'll stay, and you go."

VIII

AFTER she had gone, the moments dragged slowly. Mechanically he began to dress to go and join her. He found himself face to face with the fact that neither did he care to do the things that were right and proper for her to do, nor could he stay alone without her.

He reached the place, and sat down at a table. He looked round, and his eyes fell on her.

She was dancing with a very passion of youth and joy. As she swayed, she let the world look into her heart, as she had let Morton look on the night when he had first seen her. Her head was tilted back, her eyes gazed rapturously into her partner's, and her lips were parted ever so slightly, as if for a kiss.

She let the world look into her heart, but no longer with innocence, for he had made a woman of her, and had given her the terrible and sophisticated passion of an older man—a passion he had not known that he possessed. She had taken this and it had flowed through her, as she had let all of life flow through her.

He saw her now as a beckoning flame, conscious of herself and of her power. She was happy as he had not seen her for a long time, and he was outside her happiness—everlastingly outside. Never again would he be able to throw fuel on the fire of her life. At most, he could fan the flame; he could never feed it, for he had fed it with his heart, and the fire of her youth had consumed his heart and his new-found youth together.

And since the sight of her hurt him too deeply, and he knew that he must forever sit outside the circle of her life, he crept miserably home.

He sat in his empty room, thinking. He felt no anger with her, for he was a man of wisdom, and his wisdom made him realize the truth. Phœbe loved the man he had been; she had loved the youth in him, which had been a reflection of her own. She had imagined him as achieving new things, but his work was finished. She had loved the man he was. The man he was to be she would never love.

There swept over him, as through an open door from the great beyond, a sweet wind of oblivion, cool and comforting. He went to his bag and took out from it the little revolver that he carried with him. For a while he gazed out into the friendly blackness, his hand clasped lovingly around the pearl handle.

So, comfortably, for a moment, he played with the thought of death; but he knew it could only be play. He put the revolver and the comforting thought away at the same time.

He knew he must go on as he had been, only ever more slowly and lamely. He knew that he would never be able to escape the devil's arithmetic.

The SUBMARINE

The Terror of MODERN NAVAL WARFARE

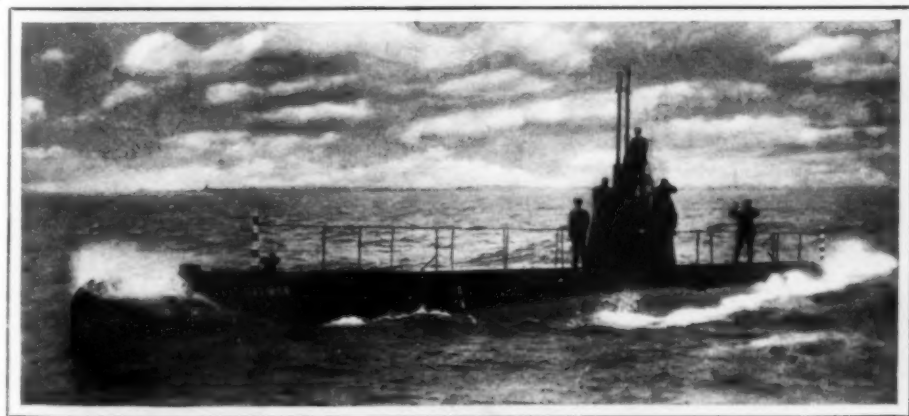
by
Leland Conness



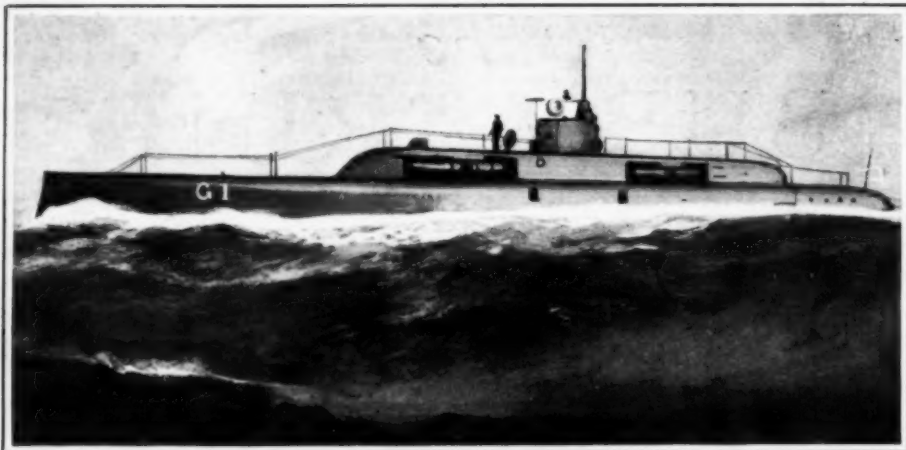
IT seems strange, to-day, to recall that only fifteen years ago a distinguished American rear-admiral, then the leading member of the Board of Construction of the United States Navy Department, thus dismissed the subject of submarines from consideration among the types of construction proposed for the current year:

"By the Eternal, swimming was intended for fishes, and flying for birds!"

And indeed it would be possible to quote similar expressions of a still more recent date. America, which did so much to give the aeroplane to the world through the experiments of the Wrights, has been as slow to appreciate the importance of the submarine—of which another American, Robert Fulton, was the first practical builder—as she was to adopt air-craft for use in her military service.



AN AMERICAN SUBMARINE, THE SALMON, WITH THE FUNNELS AND OTHER DECK EQUIPMENT REMOVED, IN READINESS TO DIVE

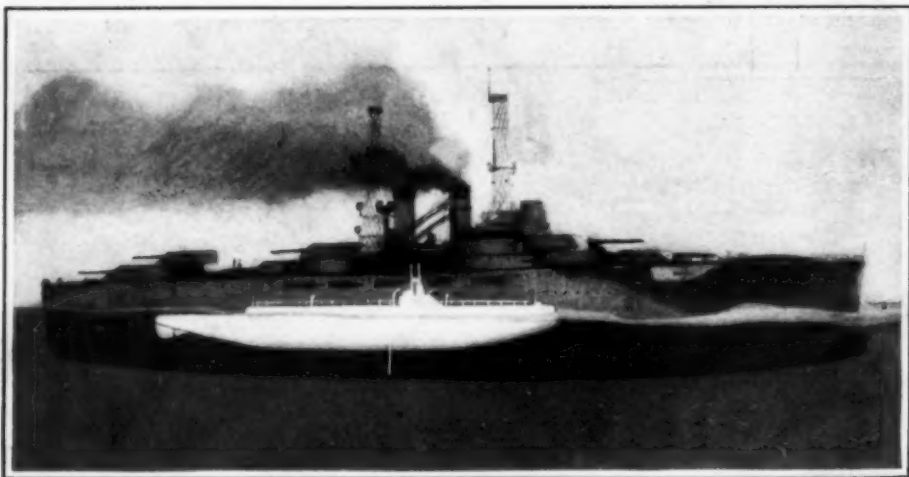


AN AMERICAN SUBMARINE OF THE G CLASS—THESE WERE THE FIRST VESSELS WITH DECK TORPEDO-TUBES THAT COULD BE FIRED EITHER ABOVE WATER OR UNDER WATER

"Battle-ship mad" is a term that has been applied to our naval officers by more than one member of Congress. In attempting to keep down the tremendous expense of the appropriation bills, the economists of our national legislature have continually cut the estimates sent in by the various Secretaries of the Navy for dreadnoughts or superdreadnoughts; but nothing, as a rule, has been placed in the bills to make up for these cuts in the official program of construction. Little has been done toward bringing to a higher state of perfection the comparatively tiny submarine, capable of

destroying the greatest battle-ship in a few minutes, and costing but a fraction as much as the big ship.

Although American naval authorities have repeatedly stated before Congressional committees that our fighting fleet is primarily designed for defense, not for attack, yet the submarine—capable of giving efficient defense for a minimum cost—has never had the attention it deserves, either in the Navy Department or in Congress. Battle-ships necessitating an outlay of millions of dollars, and fortifications with their enormous expense for maintenance,

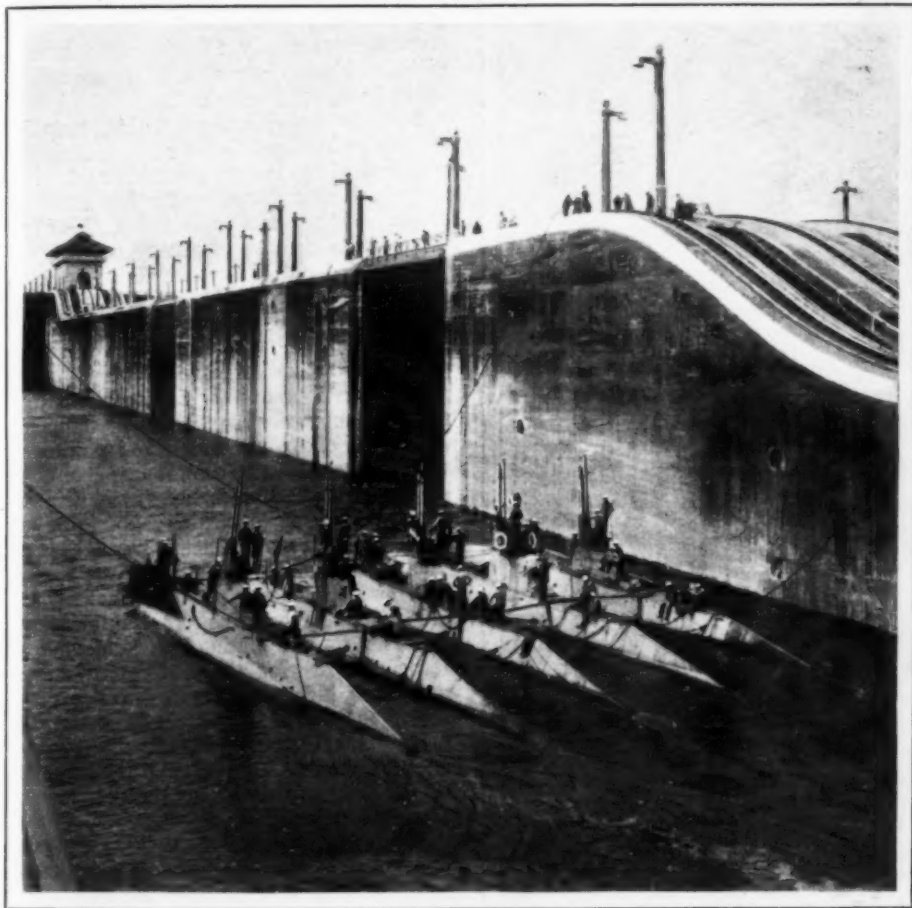


A DIAGRAM WHICH SHOWS THE COMPARATIVE SIZE OF A LARGE MODERN SUBMARINE (OUTLINED IN WHITE) AND A SUPERDREADNOUGHT, THE U. S. S. WYOMING

have been placed to the fore instead of the more effective and far less costly submarine.

Admiral Dewey has long been a consistent friend of the type which has already made such a record in the European war. Nearly fifteen years ago, speaking of the battle of Manila Bay, he said:

"I hadn't a vessel that could get into the Pasig River, and the submarines could have come out of it at night. We should not have been able to see them until they were close to us, and my experience has been that the gunners are likely to fire very badly under these conditions."

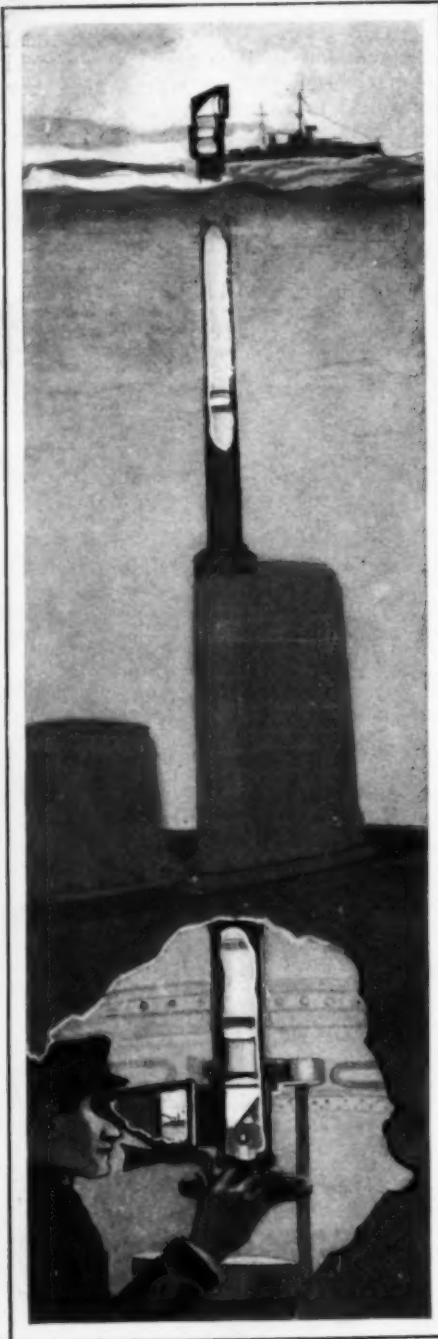


A SQUADRON OF AMERICAN SUBMARINES IN THE GATUN LOCKS ON ITS WAY THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL TO THE PACIFIC COAST

"From what I have seen of the work of the submarines, it is my belief that I could not have held that bay with my squadron of fifteen ships if the enemy had had two of these boats with determined operators on board. The strain would have worn us out. We should have had to be constantly on the watch, never knowing when the blow would fall. The human frame could not have stood it.

Apart from the question of economy, Admiral Dewey here hit upon one of the most important factors in the use of the submarine.

The enemy, never knowing when to expect an attack, or from what direction it will come, must be continually on guard, and is always expecting a sudden explosion which will sink the greatest of dreadnoughts. After being kept under this



THE PERISCOPE OF A SUBMARINE—A DIAGRAM WHICH SHOWS HOW A VIEW OF SURROUNDING OBJECTS IS PROJECTED BY MIRRORS TO THE EYE OF AN OBSERVER IN THE SUBMERGED BOAT

strain, night and day, for weeks at a time, the nerves of both officers and men are in such condition as to render them absolutely unfit for effective work in a crisis.

At the time of an important battle, this strain will tell. The crews of a fleet which has not been subjected to such mental torment will prove their efficiency in contrast to men tired and worn out by the strain of watching constantly for the little thread of foam which alone signals the approach of the hostile periscope.

Fully to understand what this strain is, it must be realized that a submarine is invisible until she is actually ready to fire her torpedo from a distance of a few hundred yards. She can sight the huge hulk of her enemy at a distance of several miles, drop below the surface until within striking distance, and then, rising until her periscope is above the surface for only a moment, obtain the angle at which her torpedo is to be discharged.

The periscope of the modern submarine is a steel tube only four inches in diameter, rising just above the water, and painted a dull gray, so as to be almost invisible even on a clear day. The chance of sighting the periscope of an attacking submarine at night, when the water is at all rough, is so small as to be almost negligible.

A single glance gives the commanding officer of the submarine all the information he needs for the aiming and launching of torpedoes carrying three or four hundred pounds of high explosives. Naval experts assert that if the assailant takes proper precautions, the odds are at least twenty to one that the first knowledge of the presence of the tiny craft will be through an explosion which will wreck the enemy.

From the standpoint of economy, the possession of a submarine fleet is quite as much to be desired as from the standpoint of efficiency.

The enormous expense of maintaining a great fleet of dreadnoughts is something which the average taxpayer seldom realizes. The latest "Naval Year Book" shows that the battle-ship Connecticut cost the United States \$1,101,888.89 for her maintenance during a single year. This is apart from the vast sum spent for her construction and armament; and it should be remembered that there are in the United States Navy about twenty vessels of the Connecticut class.

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ALL THAT IS VISIBLE OF A SUBMARINE AS IT APPROACHES ITS VICTIM, WITH THE PERISCOPE BARELY DISTINGUISHABLE AGAINST THE NEUTRAL TINT OF THE SEA

From a copyrighted photograph by the International News Service, New York

In contrast to this, the most expensive submarine in the navy, when in commission for the full twelve months, costs only thirty thousand dollars.

The initial cost of battle-ships and submarines may well be a question of special interest to those who pay the bills for their construction—that is, to the people of the United States. It was announced last year that Congress had appropriated money for two dreadnoughts, not to exceed in cost \$7,800,000 each. To one not familiar with naval procedure, or with the actual cost of big fighting ships, it might appear that \$7,800,000 was the amount to be expended for each of these vessels, fully equipped. As a matter of fact, every modern battle-ship, completed and equipped for active service, costs our government something like fifteen millions of dollars.

The cost of a battle-ship of the Pennsylvania class, when built by a private contractor, figures out as follows:

Construction and maintenance.....	\$7,800,000
Armor and armament.....	7,013,410
Equipment.....	110,000
Total.....	\$14,923,410

The carefully phrased wording of the naval appropriation bill, however, states:

The President is hereby authorized to have constructed two first-class battle-ships, carrying as

heavy armor and as powerful armament as any vessel of their class, to have the highest practicable speed and the greatest desirable radius of action, and to cost, exclusive of armor and armament, not to exceed \$7,800,000 each.

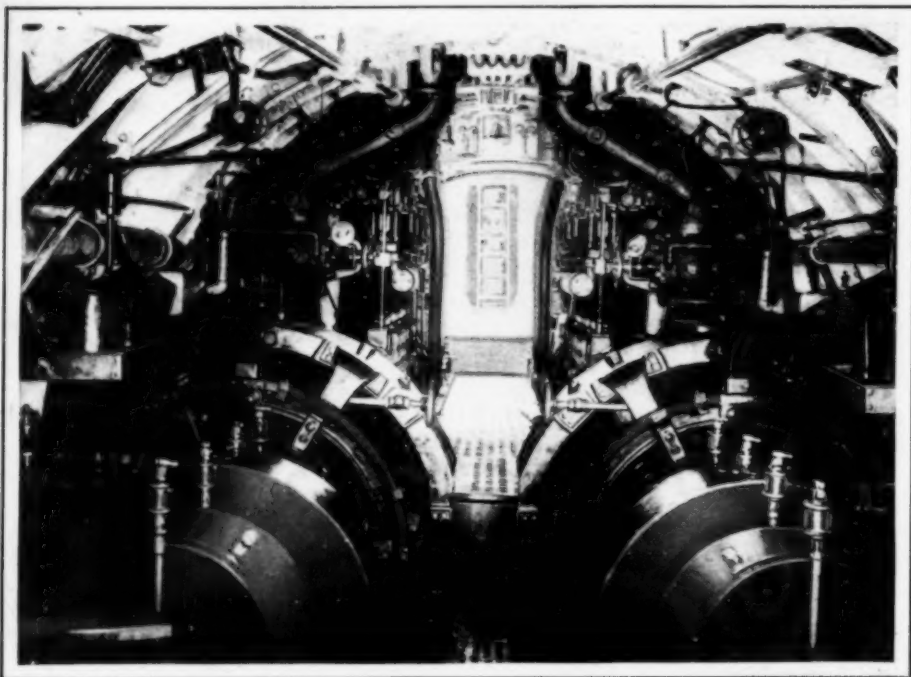
As shown above, the cost of the armor and armament of a dreadnought is approximately as much as the expense for building the vessel itself.

With these figures for the construction of battle-ships let us compare the cost of the submarine. The coast-defense type of submarine, which the navy has been using for the past five years, costs, on an average, four hundred and fifty thousand dollars for each boat. Such vessels have a radius of action of about four hundred miles, and can defend a considerable stretch of coast.

In the last naval act, provision was made for a group of harbor-defense submarines. These boats will be smaller than the coast-defense vessels, and will have a more restricted radius, but they will cost only three hundred thousand dollars apiece.

Remembering that the present type of dreadnought costs fifteen millions, and that the figures are continually rising, it does not take much mathematics to calculate that thirty-three coast-defense submarines, or fifty harbor-defense submarines, could be built for the price of one dreadnought.

Two more dreadnoughts were asked for by Secretary Daniels at the last session



THE INTERIOR OF A SUBMARINE, LOOKING FORWARD FROM THE AFTER PART OF THE VESSEL — IN THE FOREGROUND ARE THE TWO ELECTRIC MOTORS WHICH DRIVE THE SUBMARINE WHEN IT IS SUBMERGED

of Congress. For the price of these monster vessels our present fleet of fifty submarines could be increased to one hundred vessels, some of them large, sea-going craft capable of handling the new long-range torpedoes recently perfected by the Ordnance Bureau of the Navy Department. The protection afforded by these flotillas would go a great way toward making our coasts secure from attack by an enemy's fleet and from attempted invasion by his transports. With this security we could take a "naval holiday" with a clear conscience.

The highest estimate of the cost of the proposed type of sea-going submarine, a larger and more powerful craft than anything of the sort now in existence, is as follows:

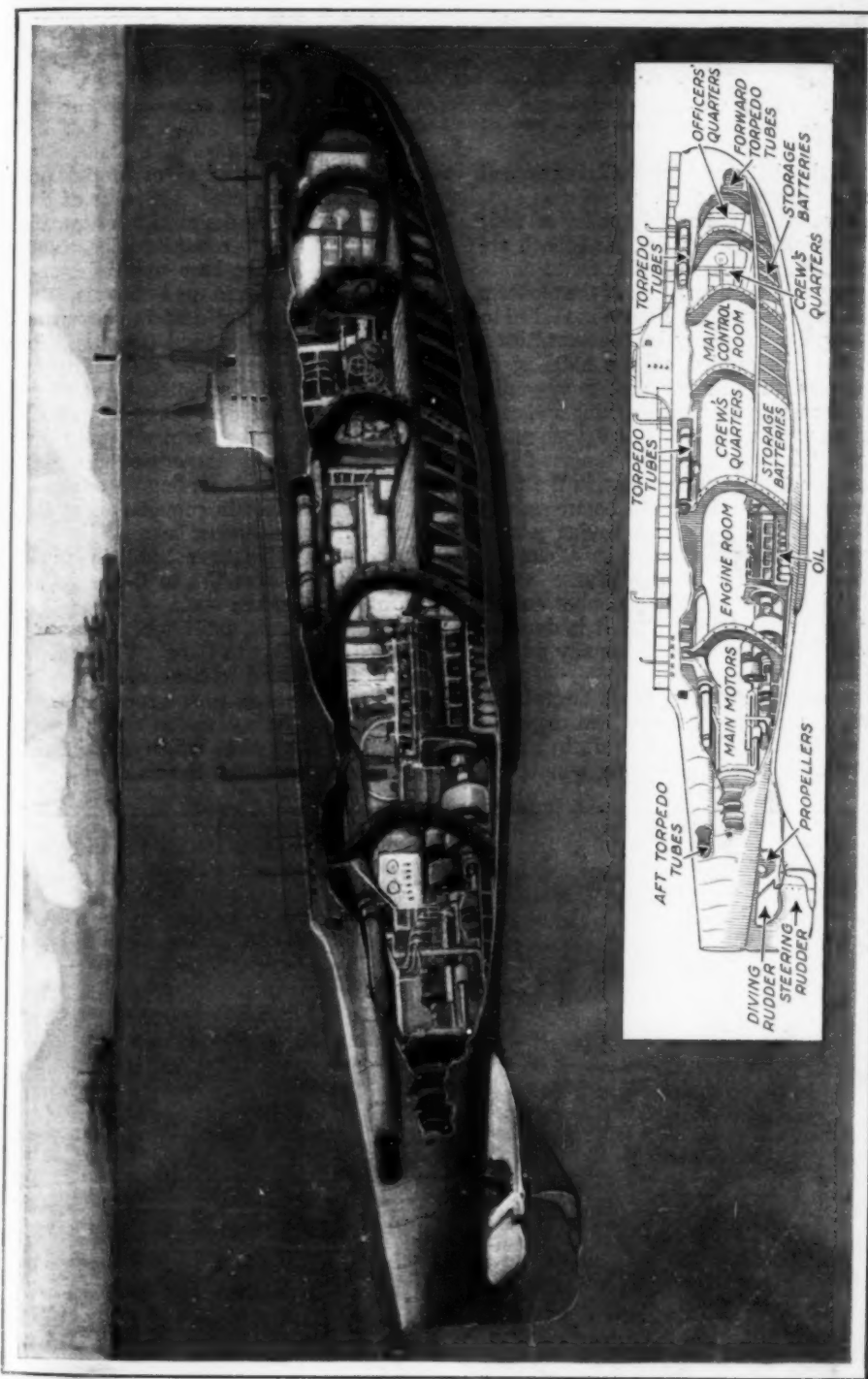
Construction and Maintenance.....	\$1,110,000
Armor and armament.....	255,000
Equipment.....	16,000
Total.....	\$1,381,000

Major-General W. W. Wotherspoon, United States Army, in his last report, made

when chief of staff, stated that our protection was "limited by the power of the fleet to protect the country from invasion over the sea." This being true, is it not apparent that the fleet ought to be equipped in the most effective manner for repelling any possible invader?

In the British navy there has been a steady and logical development of the submarine, inaugurated about 1901. Successive groups of these vessels, at first of comparatively small displacement, were built, each group being homogeneous in design. Displacement and power were increased with each flotilla, and all the lessons growing out of experience with preceding groups were considered in designing the newer vessels. The necessary "mother ships" and tenders were also provided as a part of each group of vessels commissioned. The result is a highly efficient submarine service, which forms an important part of the British navy.

The number of British submarines in commission at the outbreak of the present war was stated as eighty-four, and there



SECTION OF A LARGE MODERN SUBMARINE, WITH A KEY DIAGRAM INDICATING THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE VARIOUS PORTIONS OF THE VESSEL



THE DEADLY WEAPON OF THE SUBMARINE--A TORPEDO WITH LANCE HEAD, DESIGNED TO CUT THROUGH A WAR-SHIP'S DEFENSIVE NETTING

is no doubt that new ones are being turned out as rapidly as possible.

In contrast to the orderly policy of their British neighbors and allies, the French are understood to have vacillated in their submarine program. Although one of the pioneers in this important field, France has failed to pursue a policy of orderly development. Moreover, she has carried on the building of submarines only in her own navy-yards, where the whole work of designing and construction was in the hands of French naval officers. The result was that she has fallen behind her leading competitors in the race. France now has a large but heterogeneous quota of submarines, some having a considerable cruising radius, while others are designed only for harbor-defense work. Statisticians give the total number on her navy list as seventy-six, but it is doubted whether half as many are actually available for service.

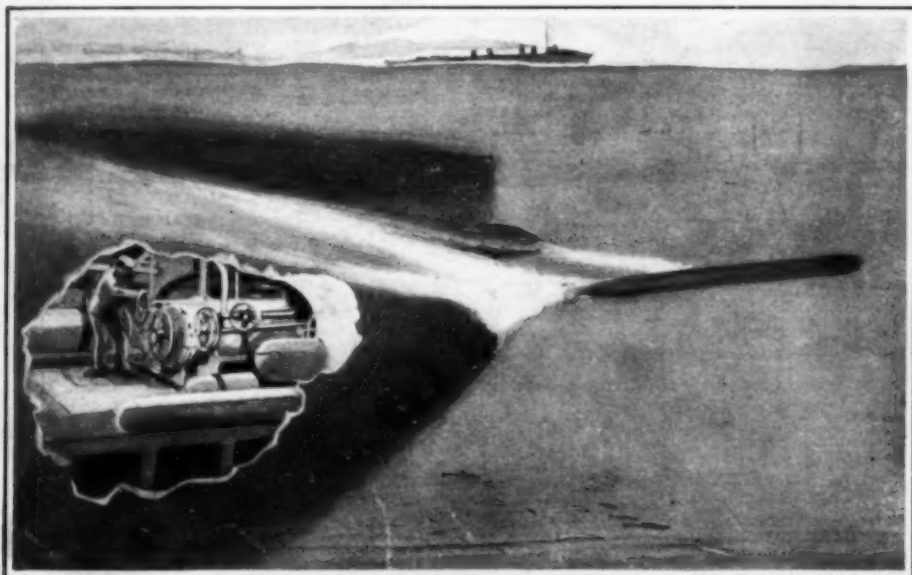
In motive power the French began with steam, changed to gasoline, then to heavy oil, and finally went back again to steam. For running submerged, storage-batteries,

the most approved method of propulsion, have generally been used; but some of the boats were originally designed to use steam even for under-surface work. The result is understood to have been unsatisfactory.

After Great Britain and France, the foreign powers ranking next in submarine strength are Germany and Japan. The navy lists credit the former with thirty or more, the latter with seventeen; but there is apparently a good deal of mystery about the true number of the German "under-sea boats," for different authorities give different particulars. According to one version, the Kaiser had in commission at the outbreak of war in August last:

Four small submarines built in 1906-1909, numbered from U-1 to U-4, suitable only for coast-defense work.

Eight larger craft, built 1909-1910, and numbered from U-5 to U-12. These boats displace three hundred tons and carry a crew of twenty-three, with a speed of thirteen knots on the surface and nine knots submerged. The U-9, which sank three British cruisers, belongs to this class.



A DIAGRAM WHICH SHOWS THE DISCHARGE OF A TORPEDO FROM ONE OF THE TUBES OF A SUBMARINE

From twelve to fifteen submarines of the Germania type, built since 1910, and numbered from U-13 upward. These are powerful craft, displacing about nine hundred tons. They can make seventeen knots on the surface and twelve submerged, and have a wide radius of action—as the events of the war have proved, for it is no doubt boats of this class that have been active in the English Channel and even in the Irish Sea. They carry one or two small guns, which are lowered into the deck for traveling below the surface. They can sink to a depth of one hundred and fifty feet, and can remain away from port for at least ten days, or perhaps longer, without a fresh supply of fuel. It is highly probable that the latest boats are larger, speedier, and more heavily armed than the earlier units of the same type.

Besides these three classes, it is certain that when the war began other submarines were under construction in German yards, and there is no doubt that special efforts have since been made to strengthen this dangerous arm of the Kaiser's fleet. A German naval authority is said to have declared that his country would have a total of fifty in commission before the end of last year; but it is, of course, impossible to secure anything like exact figures.

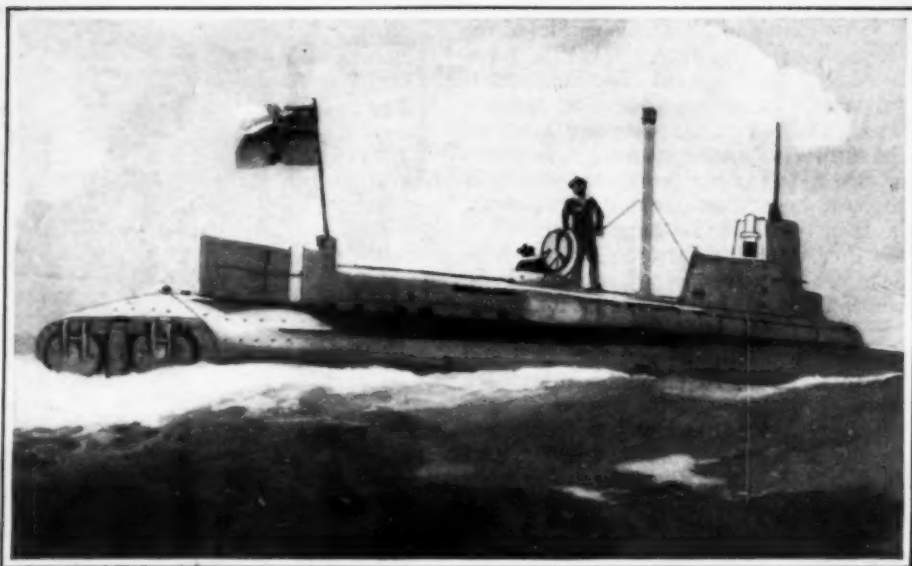
In our own navy, barring the original Holland, which has been stricken from the naval list, it may be safely said that every boat is available for the service for which it was designed, even though Rear-Admiral Fletcher admitted last autumn, before a Congressional committee, that only one submarine was actually in condition for immediate use. The others happened to be laid up for repairs, it being the policy of the Navy Department to do as much work as possible on submarines during the winter, when they are not needed for practise in the open sea.

It must be apparent to any one who admits the necessity of a navy that the maintenance of a larger fleet of submarines is the readiest and most economical method of retaining the place which the United States at present holds among the nations of the world. We are slipping backward year by year with respect to dreadnoughts. We have been warned that at our present rate of construction we shall soon be fourth or even fifth in naval strength, while two years ago we were second.



SECTION OF A MODERN AUTOMOBILE TORPEDO—A, FIRING-PIN; B, GUNCOTTON OR OTHER HIGH EXPLOSIVE; C, COMPRESSED AIR; D, CONTROL CHAMBER; E, ENGINE; F, GYROSCOPE; G, RUDDERS

THE DAVIS TORPEDO, AN AMERICAN INVENTION WHICH DISCHARGES AN ARMOR-PIERCING PROJECTILE ON STRIKING A VESSEL—A, FIRING-PIN; B, EIGHT-INCH GUN; C, PROJECTILE; D, PROPELLER AND RUDDERS OF TORPEDO



A GERMAN SUBMARINE TORPEDO-BOAT OF A LARGE MODERN TYPE, RUNNING ON THE SURFACE, AND SHOWING HER TWO STERN TORPEDO-TUBES

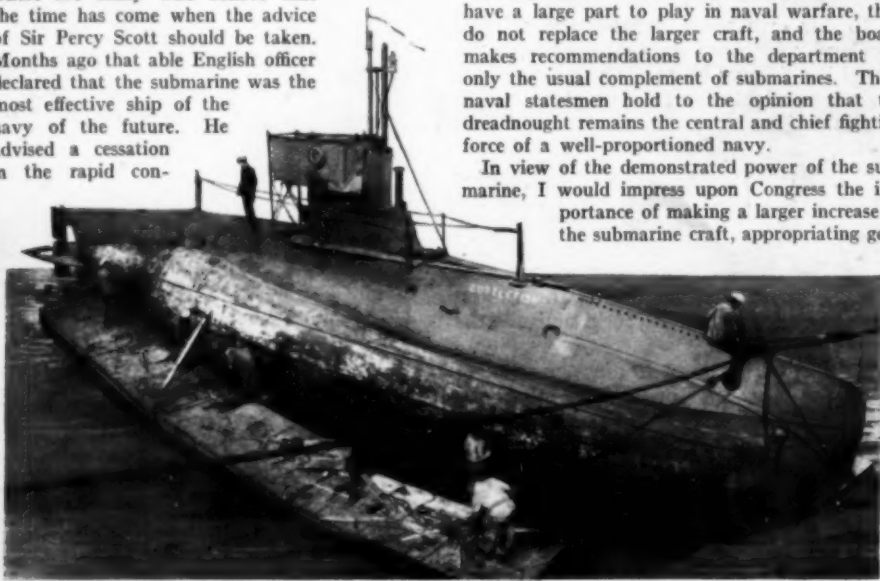
In his annual report of December, 1914, Secretary Daniels said:

Recent developments in naval warfare have strengthened faith in the efficacy of the submarine. There are many who believe that the time has come when the advice of Sir Percy Scott should be taken. Months ago that able English officer declared that the submarine was the most effective ship of the navy of the future. He advised a cessation in the rapid con-

struction of dreadnoughts, and the utilization of the money thus spent in building large numbers of submarines.

The lay mind has accepted this view of the policy, but the members of the General Board of the navy are convinced that, while the submarines have a large part to play in naval warfare, they do not replace the larger craft, and the board makes recommendations to the department for only the usual complement of submarines. These naval statesmen hold to the opinion that the dreadnought remains the central and chief fighting force of a well-proportioned navy.

In view of the demonstrated power of the submarine, I would impress upon Congress the importance of making a larger increase in the submarine craft, appropriating gen-

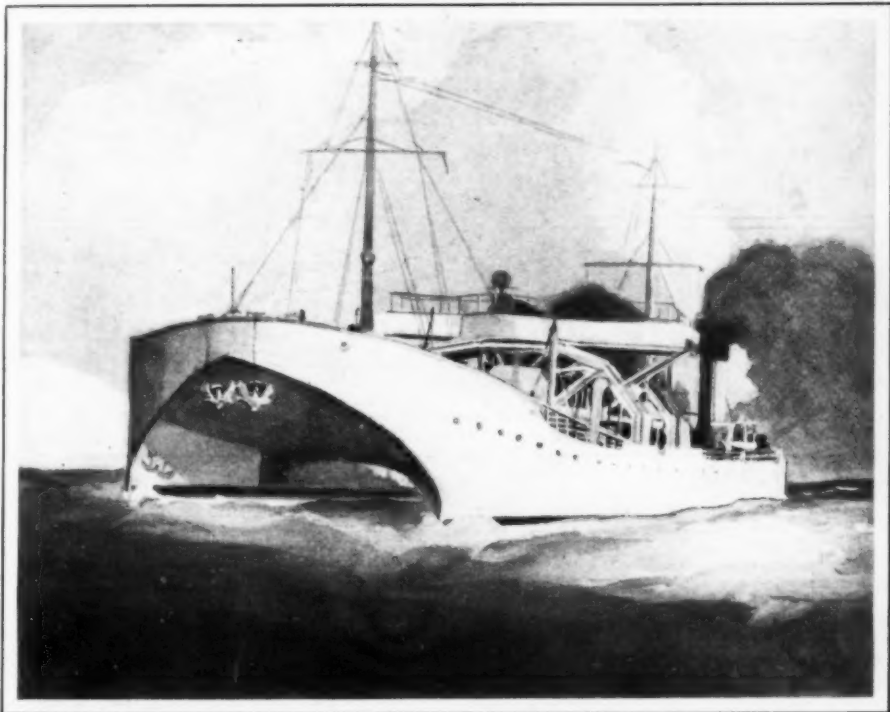


AN AMERICAN SUBMARINE IN DRY DOCK—THIS IS ONE OF THE SMALLER VESSELS OF THE COAST-DEFENSE TYPE

From a copyrighted photograph by E. Muller, Jr., New York

cously therefor without reducing the appropriations for other craft. When the relative sizes of the fleets of the world is considered, the United States has a submarine flotilla relatively and actually very powerful; but what we have done in submarine construction is only an earnest of what must be done in the future. When we shall have a division of sea-going submarines in com-

The largest submarines now in service under the American flag are those of the L type, measuring one hundred and sixty-five feet in length, with a displacement of six hundred tons, and a contract speed of fourteen knots on the surface, or eleven knots submerged. The newspapers recently re-



A GERMAN SUBMARINE TENDER, A VESSEL SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO SERVE AS A FLOATING DRY DOCK FOR SUBMARINES

mission, we shall have added to the battle-ship fleet a strong fighting unit which will be of great importance in any oversea operation.

In comparing our submarine strength with that of foreign navies, Secretary Daniels might have mentioned the vastly greater length of coast that we have to guard. He might also have made a telling comparison between the cost of a dreadnought and that of a submarine.

ported the launching of the third vessel of this class. Their inferiority in size and power to the latest British and German submarines shows that the United States has a good deal of leeway to make up in this important branch of naval construction.


It may be going too far to say that the day of the battle-ship is closed, or even closing; but it is certainly true that the submarine is just coming into its own.

DEATH

THE Player stretched his vast, vague hand
Through time and space, and moved a pawn.
My neighbor's house was still. Men said:
"His soul went out at dawn."

F. Dana Burnet

The 1916 CAMPAIGN ALREADY UPON US



by
Judson C. Welliver

IT seems only as yesterday since we were in the midst of the national campaign of 1912; yet only a short year hence we shall be once more in the thick of nomination-making, preliminary to the quadrennial election.

Whether the United States will be at that time in a political frame of mind; whether there will be issues sharply drawn; whether the party in power will have had a fair chance to test out its program, or the opposition will be ready to join issues; whether business conditions will indicate the desirability of a political upheaval, or international relations will dictate the propriety of avoiding domestic dissensions—all these things will be immaterial. The processes of the spheres will have completed the four-year cycle that has been prescribed, and we must perforce have a Presidential campaign.

It is a system calculated to give us false issues, and to conceal real ones. The real issues grow out of the country's administration and legislation, and are made by the men who administer and legislate for us. But when the time comes to state these and demand the national verdict on

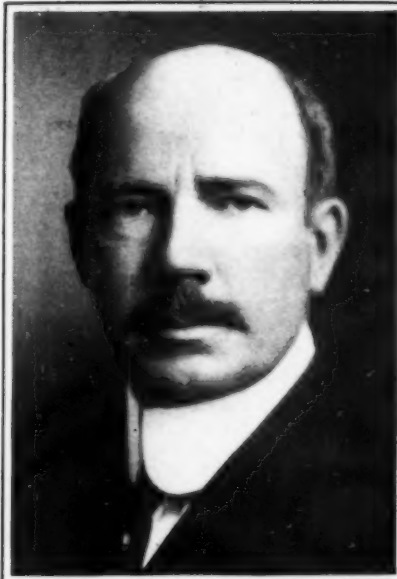
them, the very men who have been responsible for making the issues—Congress and the Administration at Washington—step down and out and a new organization is summoned into existence for a few days, clothed with the greatest powers our system gives to any body under the government.

This new organization—the national convention—makes up its own statement of the issues, and tells us on what we are to vote. Unknown to the Constitution and the law, ephemeral and irresponsible, it is yet the most potent political mechanism that the American genius for government has devised.

Ideally democratic in theory, the national convention was called into existence two generations ago as a protest against what was considered the undue domination of affairs by the members of Congress and the Administration. Before its advent, the caucus of each party in Congress made the party's nominations for President and Vice-President, and prepared whatever statement of the issues was made. In a generation in which national politics was much more personal than now, this old system made personal relationship and acquaint-

ance so important that there was revolt against it, and the revolt brought the national convention, which it was conceived would give the people a chance to pass their own verdict.

The national conventions ultimately fell under the control of political machines, and in recent years have been accused of failing to reflect the real sense of the country. Though these charges of unrepresentative character have long been made against the conventions of both great parties it chances that the Republican convention of 1912



CONGRESSMAN FRANK E. DOREMUS, OF MICHIGAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

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brought a climax in the discussion between the masses and the masters of the parties, and resulted in a complete split of the Republican organization.

As a result of that split, and of the crushing defeat which the party suffered as a consequence, the national convention, as an institution, is to-day on probation. It is on its good behavior. The country is giving it a last chance to prove whether it can do the work wanted of it, or whether it has fallen into an impotence, a moral lethargy, that makes it incapable of seeing straight.



THOMAS J. PENCE, OF NORTH CAROLINA, ASSISTANT TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

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WILLIAM F. MCCOMBS, OF NEW YORK, CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE, AND CAMPAIGN MANAGER IN 1912

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At the end of 1912 it was a common observation among politicians that the country had seen its last national convention. The Republican party was disgusted, while the Democratic party had written into its platform a declaration in favor of making national nominations by primary, which

Thus it comes about that the Republicans will have one sort of national convention machinery in 1916, the Democrats another. One basis of representation will prevail in the Democratic convention, another basis in the Republican. The Republican party is making experiments, the



JOHN C. EVERSMAN, SECRETARY OF THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

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would do away with the necessity for the convention.

But both parties have somewhat changed their minds. They have cooled off. President Wilson, after once insisting that he expected the national primary to be provided by Congress, dropped the subject, and no Democratic authority has since alluded seriously to it. The Republicans set about remedying their convention system, in the hope that it might be saved and the revolutionary primary system avoided.

Democrats are sticking to long-established methods; and the real, bottom fact is that the Republicans are giving the national convention system a last chance to show whether it can "make good."

If it doesn't prove its case, it will have to go, and that soon. If it survives 1916, it may not do so for very long. The primary idea is on its heels, and will not be long in overtaking and superseding it. A performance in either party's convention of 1916 even distantly suggesting that of the



CHARLES DEWEY HILLES, OF NEW YORK, CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington



CONGRESSMAN FRANK P. WOODS, OF IOWA, CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

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Republican convention in 1912, would sound the doom of the whole convention system. There is too keen a recollection of the moral collapse of the convention idea, too lively a disposition to translate its consequences into the terms of national disaster.

In the effort to give the old system a new chance to show what it can do, the authorities of the Republican party are rearranging the machinery of its operation. With a national campaign closely approaching, it is time for the country to be interested in the nature and work-



JAMES BURTON REYNOLDS, OF MASSACHUSETTS, SECRETARY OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington

ings of the new mechanism.

Under the system that has obtained for decades past in both parties, a national convention is composed of two delegates for each member of Congress—House and Senate together—plus some rather casual representation for the Territories, the District of Columbia, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. In general, the schemes of the two parties have been alike; the new measures which the Republicans are now adopting will bring about a wider difference in procedure than has ever existed before.

The old system worked better for the Democratic than for the Republican party, because the latter has no effective strength in a considerable section of the United States. In the South an electoral vote for the Republican party would be the sign of a political earthquake; whereas in the North, East, and West there is always a fighting chance for either party.

The Republican party at the South, having almost no popular vote, has been held together since the Civil War by the hope of reward in the form of national patronage. The office-holders have become a trained political army, responsive to the will of Washington, which gives out the jobs. So the national organization has been able as a rule to control the delegations from the South; and this control made a handsome nest-egg out of which to hatch nominations. But this same South, so highly serviceable in the business of running conventions and making nominations, has had no electoral votes for the party.

In the 1912 Republican convention, for instance, eleven Southern States—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia—had two hundred and fifty-two votes out of one thousand and seventy-eight, or twenty-three per cent of the total. That is, the candidate who could control the Southern organizations through Federal patronage had almost half enough votes to nominate. Through a long period it has become plain that the power which is able to do this generally does it. A section which can contribute nothing to elect a Republican has half enough power to nominate, and that advantage has commonly been determinative.

It had been evident for a long time that some day a crisis must be reached in this situation. It came in 1912. The Southern office-holding interest was all for the re-nomination of Mr. Taft, and it renominated him. Its methods did not commend themselves. Delegations from a number of States outside the South—delegations from States which represented the potentiality of electoral votes for the party—were unseated by Southern votes in order that Taft delegations might take their places and insure control of the convention to the Taft forces. The result was the party split and the overwhelming defeat of that year.

When the election was over, and the party wreck fully apparent, the cool-headed leaders, with eyes to the future, took up the question of reforms that would avoid a repetition of the disaster, and induce the dissenters to return to the fold.

The executive committee of the national committee met, and was confronted with two chief complaints. The first was against the representation of States in proportion to their Congressional delegations, without reference to their Republican voting strength. The second was against the power of the national committee to make up the temporary roll of the national convention through the decision of contested cases.

This latter power had repeatedly been under the heavy guns of criticism, because it had enabled the national committee to determine the personnel and the political direction of conventions. In case of a contest from a given State, the national committee decided which of the contesting delegations should sit in the temporary organization. The temporary organization decided which should sit in the permanent organization. But the roll made up for the temporary organization was pretty nearly certain to be accepted by the permanent, because the contesting delegations would stand together; and even the contested delegations were allowed to vote on all save their own credentials.

Thus, if there were contests in about all the Southern States—as not infrequently happened—the rule of “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours” would prevail. Georgia and Texas would vote to seat Florida; Georgia and Florida would support Texas; Texas and Florida would stand with Georgia; and when it was over, all three contested delegations would be seated, and the permanent organization would be exactly what the temporary had been.

The effect of all this was that the national committee, consisting of one member from each State, was resurrected in a Presidential year, after four years of political unimportance, to decide who should sit in the national convention. A body that nobody ever thought seriously of, responsible to nobody in particular, and about to retire from office, was practically commissioned to dictate the nominations, platform, and program of the party.

Times and conditions might utterly have

changed. The national committee chosen four years earlier might be as unrepresentative of present conditions as would the cabinet of a Pharaoh trying to fix meter-rates for the irrigation waters from the Assouan Dam. No matter; the dead hand must rule; and at length it wrecked. Now there is to be a new deal.

This dangerous weakness had existed in the machinery of both parties for many years. Circumstances might have made it the occasion of disaster to either. It happened that the circumstances ripened into disaster to the Republican party in 1912. In that year the Republican party was made, through this defective machinery, to nominate a candidate whom a large proportion of its membership did not wish to support. The result was that in the election that party polled less than three and one-half million votes, while the Progressive party, without organization, traditions, history, prestige, or adequate financial support, secured more than four millions. The Democrats, though in a sad minority, polling only six and one-quarter million votes, made an overwhelming sweep in the Electoral College, choosing four hundred and thirty-five electors, while the Progressives counted eighty-eight, and the Republicans eight. The demonstration was complete and convincing. As soon as the Republican leadership had begun to get its breath after this knockout blow, the executive committee of the national committee considered the situation, and called a meeting of the full committee, which was held in December, 1913. Meantime, much support had been gained for a proposal that an extraordinary national convention should be called to set the seal of party approval on such changes in the party law as might be necessary to convince the dissatisfied elements that in future they would get a fair hearing.

The plan of an extraordinary national convention was canvassed and rejected, on the ground that it was a cumbersome method which might not produce the desired reforms. It was pointed out that in such a gathering it would be difficult to bring together a thoroughly representative set of delegations, because the potent magnet of convention interest has always been the business of nominating a national ticket. With that attraction removed, it was doubted whether the convention would be satis-

factorily representative. The danger of getting into an endless debate that might accentuate factional differences was also fully appreciated.

After long discussion, and after hearing from a committee on party law which had previously been appointed with Charles B. Warren, of Michigan, as its chairman, the national committee decided to hold a referendum by State organizations instead of a national convention. It was agreed that the question of reforms in the organization should be submitted to the States, and that if States representing a majority of the votes in the Electoral College should favor them, the reforms should be proclaimed as adopted and as governing the national convention of 1916.

The Warren committee on law, after examining all the precedents of party history and procedure, told the national committee that only the national convention had the power to change the basis of representation by States. It was pointed out that propositions looking to reduction of the representation from those States which cast no Republican electoral votes had been discussed and voted down in the national convention so recently as 1908. Therefore it was maintained that the national convention, unquestionably the supreme legislative power of the party, had in effect affirmatively sustained the old representation plan, and nothing less than a national party authority could change it.

The majority of the national committee was found to favor a change in the rules, under which State delegations should more closely correspond to the voting strength of the party. All of the Northern and some of the Southern members took this view.

It being the general opinion that the national committee did not possess power to order such a change in the rules, and that a special national convention was impracticable, it was finally resolved to submit to the State committees a proposition looking to this change, with the understanding that if adopted by States representing a majority in the Electoral College, it should be accepted as the party law and govern the convention of 1916.

The exact terms of this proposal were promptly notified to all the State organizations, and as fast as State conventions were held the question was submitted to them. The result was that on February 2, 1915,

the national committee was able to announce that States representing a comfortable majority in the Electoral College had ratified the new proposal. It is now the law of the party, and will be followed by the national committee in calling the convention of 1916.

There were five hundred and thirty-one electoral votes in 1912, so that two hundred and sixty-six was the majority necessary to ratify the new rule. The States that formally ratified the plan, with their electoral votes, were as follows:

Arkansas, 9; California, 13; Colorado, 6; Connecticut, 7; Idaho, 4; Illinois, 29; Indiana, 15; Maine, 6; Massachusetts, 18; Michigan, 15; Missouri, 18; New Jersey, 14; New York, 45; North Carolina, 12; Ohio, 24; Oklahoma, 10; Rhode Island, 5; South Carolina, 9; Tennessee, 12; Vermont, 4; Washington, 7; West Virginia, 8; Utah, 4—total, 294.

In this list of twenty-three ratifying States are five commonly classed as Southern, so that the indorsement is representative of all sections.

The exact text of the resolution thus adopted into the party law follows:

Resolved, that this committee shall issue the call for delegates to the national convention, to be held in the year 1916, to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President, in accordance with the following basis of representation:

Each State shall be entitled in such convention to four delegates at large;

Two additional delegates at large for each representative at large in Congress elected from any State entitled to one or more additional representatives in Congress under the apportion made in accordance with the last census, but in which no new Congressional district has been provided by law;

One delegate from each Congressional district;

An additional delegate from each Congressional district in which the vote for any Republican elector in 1908, or for the Republican nominee for Congress in 1914, shall have been not less than seven thousand five hundred;

Provided, however, that the total number of delegates to which any State is entitled shall be chosen from the State at large if the law of the State in which the election occurs so prescribes; and

Provided, further, that in the case of any State electing all representatives in Congress from the State at large, such State shall be entitled to as many delegates, elected at large, as though the State were divided into separate Congressional districts.

For each delegate chosen, an alternate, to act in

the absence of the delegate, shall be chosen in the manner prescribed in the call for the convention; provided, however, that if the law of any State prescribes the method of choosing alternates, they shall be chosen in accordance with the provisions of the law of the State in which the election occurs.

Alaska and the District of Columbia shall each be entitled to two delegates; Hawaii, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands shall each be entitled to two delegates without the right to vote; and all delegates and alternates from the Territories and the Territorial possessions shall be chosen in the manner prescribed in the call for the convention.

The above basis of representation, however, shall not be made the basis of the call for the national convention to be held in the year 1916, unless prior to January 1, 1915, Republican State conventions held under the laws of the States, or called by the Republican State committees of the States, in such number of States as are entitled to cast a majority of the vote in the present Electoral College, shall ratify the action of this committee in respect to determining the basis of representation.

Under the old system each State had four delegates at large; it will have the same number under the new system.

Under the old system, each State had two delegates for every Congressman at large; it will have the same under the new system.

Under the old system, each Congressional district had two delegates. Under the new system each Congressional district will have one delegate, no matter what its Republican vote may have been, and an additional delegate provided its Republican vote exceeded seventy-five hundred.

Under the old system Alaska, the District of Columbia, the Philippine Islands, and Porto Rico each had two delegates, and Hawaii had six; total, fourteen, all of whom voted. Under the new system each of these minor political divisions gets two delegates, but they are denied the right to vote.

Under the old system Arkansas had in 1912 eighteen delegates; under the new it will have eleven. Not a single district in Arkansas gave so many as seventy-five hundred votes to a Republican candidate for Congress in 1914.

In the other Southern States, the figures will be as follows:

	Old System	New System
Alabama.....	24	15
Florida.....	12	8
Georgia.....	28	16
Kentucky.....	26	25

Louisiana.....	20	12
Mississippi.....	20	12
North Carolina.....	24	20
Oklahoma.....	20	20
South Carolina.....	18	11
Tennessee.....	24	16
Texas.....	40	24
Virginia.....	24	15

To summarize, under the old system these thirteen Southern States, including Arkansas, had two hundred and ninety-eight delegates; under the new they will have two hundred and five, a loss of ninety-three. If we add to this the fourteen votes which are withdrawn from the minor political divisions, it makes a total of one hundred and seven delegates lopped off from the sections which never produce any Republican electoral votes.

Under the old system, the thirteen Southern States and the five minor political divisions had three hundred and twelve delegates in a convention of one thousand and seventy-eight, or nearly twenty-nine per cent of the total. The number of votes needed to make a nomination was five hundred and forty. Under the new system, the convention will consist of about nine hundred and sixty delegates; necessary to nominate, about four hundred and eighty-one.

Under the old system, the thirteen States and five minor political divisions enumerated possessed fifty-eight per cent of the necessary number of votes to control. Under the new system they will possess forty-two per cent of enough to control.

The change is more important than it seems on the face of these figures, for the reapportionment of representation is not the most effective part of the new party law. Very much more significant is the new rule that the national committee has adopted, concerning the treatment of delegates selected by State primaries.

At the time of the 1912 convention, the primary was theoretically unknown to the party law. There was no presumption in favor of delegates chosen by primary, and the national committee might in its discretion refuse them places on the temporary roll of the convention. In 1912 a delegation came up from California, chosen in a primary conducted under the law of the State; yet the national committee assumed to inspect the right of that delegation to

sit, and refused seats to the delegates from one district, although their election was conceded to be perfectly regular under the State law.

State law and party law did not agree, at that time. The party law required that all district delegates should be elected solely by the voters of their respective districts; the California law provided that all the delegates of the State must be chosen at large, on the vote of the whole State. The convention declined to be bound by the State law, and threw out the delegation from one district where it was shown that, if that district's vote had been segregated, another delegation would have been selected.

This ruling gave the color of party authority for interfering with the primary laws of the States. That assumption caused quite as much bitterness as any other part of the proceedings of the convention. The primary had come to be regarded, in the increasing number of States where it had been adopted, as the real safeguard and assurance of popular rule. If it were to be contemptuously rejected, there was no extreme to which factional partizanship might not go.

So the national committee has adopted a new rule in this regard. The States are to be permitted to select delegates under their own primary laws, either at large or by districts; and these delegates, when certified by a proper State authority as duly elected under the law, are to be placed upon the roll of the convention. The national committee cannot attack their right to be seated.

This means that a large block of delegates, from States which have legalized primaries, will be immune from attack by any national committee. They will be lifted out of the mire of political manipulation, and insured an independence that may be expected to add weight to their attitude.

Thus the power of mere machinery to dominate the party council will be pruned at two important points. First, the number of delegates who represent nothing but machinery is greatly reduced; and second, the number of delegates with whom machinery cannot interfere is suddenly made an important factor in the make-up of the convention.

It is not yet possible to tell just how many delegates will come under the cer-

tification of State primaries. The Legislatures in most of the States are in session as I write; several of them are likely to pass laws on the subject.

It is not improbable that a majority of all the delegates in next year's convention will come with the certifications of State authority. Half the remainder will be from Northern States in which the party is well organized and the probability of interference by the national committee is reduced to the minimum.

Finally, the national committee is not to be expected to use its power for the perpetration of any excesses comparable to those that have been charged against it in the past. The general conclusion is that the Republican convention of 1916 may fairly be expected to represent the voice of the party majority, and to decide any questions as to the seating of delegates without turmoil or serious friction.

Adoption of the new system of representation and of passing on credentials, especially with the spread of the primary method of selecting delegates, injects another new element into the management of the campaign for the Presidential nomination. The candidates for nomination, always modest and retiring gentlemen inspired by the hope that lightning will strike them in some spectacular way, but never daring to make much noise about their ambitions, are wondering what they are expected to do under the new conditions.

The States which elect delegates in primaries will have a big influence in indicating the real temper and desires of the party. Hence there is among the aspirants for the nomination a particular desire to make a strong showing in the primary States.

How are they to do it? Shall they drop the rôle of the shrinking violet and go bold-

ly forth, stumping the primary States and asking folks to vote for them?

Or shall the ancient pretense be permitted to hold its place, and gentlemen attempt through committees and organizations to get their cases before the people by the process of fixing leaders and managing machines?

These are just now very live questions. The method of making Presidential nominations has been changed, and aspirants must adapt themselves to new conditions. It begins to look as if all the aspirants ought to hold a convention of their own and mutually agree on the terms of their belligerency. But if they did that, some who are aspiring in secret might be compelled to show their colors.

There are those—most of the politicians, in truth—who insist that when the next Republican convention meets it will have no idea whom it is going to nominate. These declare that the convention will make the nomination, in letter and in spirit; but it will have to do the work within the new party law, and that means a very different sort of national convention.

As to the Democratic convention, the circumstances are altogether different, because its work is conceded to be cut out for it in advance. It will renominate Mr. Wilson, will point with pride to his achievements, and will view with alarm any possibility of departure from the lines he has laid down for national guidance.

After 1916—well, that is looking a long time ahead; but I venture a guess that the national conventions of next year will be the last. The nation-wide primary is coming, if we may believe even those publicists who are surest that it is undesirable. It is coming, and it is generally expected to arrive before the 1920 nominations shall be imminent.

MY FATHER

COULD I forsake these rugged ways,
These paths where now I walk with men,
And hie me back to childhood's days,
To be, in body, born again—

From out this heart I call my own,
From out this soul, forever free,
You are the father—you alone—
I should ask God to give to me.

Ralph M. Thomson

THE ADVANTAGE

BY MABEL ABBOTT



OF all the men I knew, Garret Karlson was the last that I could mentally connect with anything uncanny. He was the very personification of normality—quick-witted, strong-willed, likable, keen of mind, and wiry of body.

That was a hard winter for young lawyers in Seattle, but some of us were sticking it out, climbing the cleated sidewalks of Profanity Hill to the court-house when we had no car-fare, typing our own documents in the secrecy of our all-too-quiet offices when we could not afford a stenographer, and going out to walk hastily around the block when a client was expected, in order to return breathless and trailing an atmosphere of big business.

The fellow who could get a clerkship in an established office was the lucky one that winter. Existence for the rest was a hard-to-mouth affair, with a strong likelihood of a slip between cup and lip.

Except Karlson. He had not been in Seattle long, but he was maintaining his own little office, and was not only making a living, but forging ahead at a rate that promised to put him among the big men of the bar in a short time. Every case he took he won. Every acquaintance he made was a link in a chain that led to more success. He was honest, scrupulously so; but he despised no advantage, no matter how small, or how apparently unrelated to anything he had in hand.

Nevertheless, his success was fairly earned by sheer brains and hard work, and none of us grudged it. We admired him tremendously.

We did more than that. We liked him, or felt that we were sure to like him when we knew him a little better. And as the winter wore on, we still had precisely the same feeling; because when we had known Garret Karlson longer, we nevertheless knew him no better.

It was Billy Marsden, my partner, who put the thing into words. Billy labors under a congenital necessity to say what he thinks as soon as he thinks it.

"I don't really know Karlson, you know," he said, putting his feet on my desk, one December afternoon. "I've seen a good deal of him these last few months. I know what he looks like, and how he works, and what he's trying to do, and I think he's a fine fellow; but hang it, Dunne, I don't know him. You've seen more of him than I, and I bet you don't know him. I don't believe anybody knows him. You know, Dunne, whether I'm the sort that butts in; but it's as if Karlson literally pushed me away sometimes. Do you know what I mean?"

I did, exactly. I, too, had felt the thrust of Karlson's aloofness when I was not aware of having tried to approach him. Before Marsden and I parted, however, we were penitently assuring each other that Karlson had never done or said anything to justify our feeling.

II

AND then, all of a sudden, I found myself in Karlson's confidence. It was surprised out of him and forced on me, and both of us had to accept the situation as gracefully as possible.

It was one morning as we were going to court. The cable-car that soars and swoops up and down James Street had discharged its nine-o'clock load of lawyers on Ninth Avenue. Karlson and I had found each other in the crowd, and, being in no particular hurry, had fallen behind the others, so that when we turned the corner toward the court-house we were practically alone in the street.

It was a gray, drizzling, Puget Sound winter morning. The worn-out boards of the wooden sidewalk, soaked with rain, gave treacherously under our feet. The shambling, moss-grown houses that lined one

side of the block were black with rain, and behind one of them a dog was barking hysterically.

The whole thing happened like a flash—the dog's rush and leap for Karlson's throat, my jump, far too late to stop him, and his astonished yelp as he fell backward without having touched Karlson, who stood motionless in the middle of the sidewalk, smiling a little.

The next second the dog leaped again—not so high, this time. I saw his nose and paws flatten themselves as if against a window-pane, six inches from Karlson's body, and slide downward, scrabbling frantically on thin air.

The instant all four feet touched the ground the beast turned and fled, whining in terror, with its tail between its legs, and its hair bristling. Karlson had not even raised his hand.

"What the—" I gasped, and could not frame my question.

Karlson laughed nervously. He had turned a little pale, but now he flushed like a boy caught in mischief.

"The brute's mad, I suppose," he said, walking on quickly. "Which way did he go? I'll telephone the police. He'll have to be shot."

"He—he—slid off!" I jabbered, catching Karlson by the arm and holding him. I was much stronger than he. "I saw him slide off. Karlson, in Heaven's name, what happened?"

I had entirely lost sight of the fact that he, and perhaps I, had narrowly escaped being torn by a mad dog. All my horror—and I was shaking and covered with cold perspiration—was because of that flattened nose and those scratching paws, and Karlson's still smile as he stood quiet while they tried to reach him.

It was Karlson's quiet voice that steadied me.

"I can't explain now, Dunne," he said, meeting my eyes frankly. "It would take too long; but if you'll come over to my rooms to-night, I'll tell you just what happened. Meanwhile, I'll ask you as a favor to say nothing. Afterward, I'll leave it to you."

I nodded, too bewildered to say anything, and we crossed the wooden foot-bridge from the hillside street at the rear of the court-house into the dirty, crowded hallway. Karlson made for a telephone-booth, and I went on to the probate depart-

ment, where my business took me. I wondered seriously if it could be that the scare had shaken my reason.

III

If ever I put my whole mind on my business, it was that day. By evening the medicine of work had had its effect, and I was ready to have a good laugh at myself as soon as Karlson should have told me what the joke was.

He lived at his club. His sitting-room, with its fireplace, comfortable chairs, substantial desk, and bookcases, was another expression of himself, attractive, well equipped, and modestly prosperous-looking.

I knew the girl whose face filled the silver frame on the mantelpiece. Ruth Farrar was the daughter of Kenton Farrar, and Kenton Farrar was the head of various and sundry banks, a railroad or two, and several other things, with money and power enough to make his daughter a match for a duke, even if she hadn't been a fine girl in her own right. Because of these things, there was something splendidly satisfying in the fact of her engagement to Karlson, which had just been announced. It was the kind of thing that made one think better of every one concerned in it—of Ruth and her father because they neither undervalued nor overvalued money, and of Karlson because he knew he was bringing his full share to the partnership.

And so, as I stretched myself in the comfortable chair in the pleasant room, and thought of all this, and looked across at Karlson's fine, keen, conqueror's head as he sat on the other side of the hearth, I was more than ever ready to laugh at the crazy form my excitement of the morning had taken. I could hardly remember just what I had thought I saw.

"So you want to know what happened to that dog, Dunne?" smiled Karlson quizzically.

I nodded, waiting for the joke.

"Shake," said he, holding out his hand.

I looked at him, not understanding; but as he continued to hold out his hand, I took it and gave it a cautious shake.

"Do it again!" he commanded.

"What's the idea?" I inquired.

"You'll see," he responded.

Again I took his hand—or tried to. I missed it by about six inches.

Surprised, I reached again, and did not touch it. A shiver ran up my back, and

my hair pricked behind my ears. I got up and made a quick grab for his wrist. My clutching fingers did not close around it; I did not know why.

Karlson sat leaning back in his chair, a half laugh on his lips, his right hand still extended, and his cigarette between two fingers of his left. Something recoiled in me; then I went hot all over and sprang at him. What I wanted to do, I think, was to seize his shoulder and shake him. My hand did not touch the rough cloth of his coat.

I threw myself upon him, and it was as if there were a thin but impenetrable shell of air between his body and mine. Never again shall I know anything so unnerving as the vain pressure of my strength against—nothing at all!

In my struggle to get at him, I struck the chair violently. I felt no pain, but Karlson cried out:

"Here! Hold on! You'll hurt yourself. Let up, old man!"

As he spoke, he jumped up, the barrier dissolved, and I felt the solidity of his body in my arms. It was like waking from a nightmare. I dug my fingers into his arm until he winced.

"For Heaven's sake," he panted, laughing, "behave yourself, you wild man! I didn't think you'd go to pieces like that, or I'd have explained first and showed you afterward. Sit down and be quiet. Do you want a drink?"

I didn't want a drink. I wanted an explanation.

"It's just a queer faculty I've had since I was a boy," Karlson explained, his pleasant, logical inflection shudderingly contrasted with the weird thing he was saying. "I discovered, when I was about fourteen years old, that I could hold people or things away from me if I wanted to. It's the same feeling as when one parries a question, only more so. I think it is just an extension of a strong personal reserve. That sounds rather vague and unscientific, I know, but it's the nearest to an explanation that I can give. Father and mother were horrified at the thing, and I didn't do it very often. They wanted me to stop it altogether, but I found that the power grew less if it was not exercised, and increased if I used it, and I somehow didn't want to lose it. It's entirely subject to my will—that is," he corrected himself, "of course I did it involuntarily this morning when the

dog jumped at me—like winking, you know."

I sat tense in my chair, trying to reconcile the every-day actualities around me with the evidence of my own senses and the incredible story that Karlson was so convincingly asking me to believe. Suddenly I grew irritated. I didn't want to hear or see any more about it. I was tired to exhaustion. Karlson saw it.

"I'm sorry, Dunne," he said. "I'd never have told you if it hadn't happened just as it did; but after that you were entitled to an explanation. And I'll be frank and say I'm glad somebody knows about it. Since my parents died, nobody has known. I often use it a little for practise, but in such a way that people don't suspect. For instance, if you were standing near me, and leaned over my shoulder to see a letter in my hand—of course, you wouldn't, but I'm just illustrating—I might do it, just to see if I could. Then I should move away a step or two, and all you would realize would be that you didn't get near enough to see the letter before I moved."

I remembered Marsden's expression—"it's as if he literally pushed me away." And I remembered my own occasional feeling of repulsion. I opened my lips to tell him, and then closed them again. What was the use? The thing wasn't true; it couldn't be true. Why argue about it? I wanted to forget it.

Karlson saw that, too.

"Forget it, Dunne, if it bothers you," he said. "I oughtn't to have unloaded it on you."

As usual, he carried his point. I felt as if I had been deserting him.

"Look here, Karlson," I said, speaking from the bottom of my heart; "do you forget it, too. You say the power decreases if you don't use it; then for Heaven's sake don't use it. Let it die. You can't afford to be abnormal."

"It kept that dog from biting me."

Karlson's smile was growing quizzical again, and my annoyance returned. I couldn't answer that argument, and yet I knew I was right.

"There isn't a chance in a million that it'll ever be any use to you again," I said, angrily conscious that I was admitting the existence of a thing which I had determined to ignore. "And you'll have a wife some day, and a family. Think about that. Do you want them to know about it? Or do

you want to have something you've got to conceal from them?"

Karlson's face changed, and I thought I had "got to him" at last; but the next moment he smiled again.

"Don't worry, Dunne," he said. "It's just something extra I've got—a little advantage, you might say, over the rest of the world. A man can't afford to throw away any advantages. I might need it again some day."

I walked home, breathing deeply in the wet night air, and literally trying to forget it. But all the way I saw Karlson standing in the middle of the sidewalk, smiling a little, his hands at his sides, and the dog's teeth and claws scrabbling against the air six inches away from him. Or I saw him leaning back in his chair, still smiling, while I threw myself on the impenetrable shell that his will had formed about him.

IV

THE next few weeks were busy ones for both of us. I was picking up a little business, Karlson was steadily increasing his, and our paths did not often cross. His wedding was to be in May.

One day in the last week of March we met, and I noticed that he was not looking well. Generally he was the picture of health. Hard work had always seemed to agree with him. He would work all night preparing a case, and appear at the trial in the morning without a shadow under his eyes or a tremor in his hand. So when he suddenly lost his healthy color, and his eyes looked strained, I noticed it, and took the first chance to ask him what was the matter.

He jumped violently when I spoke, shrinking as if I had raised my fist. Then he recovered himself, but spoke peevishly, and all but told me to mind my own business.

I watched him as closely as I could for a week, and what I saw determined me to assault the fortress of his reticence. Karlson swinging around his usual brilliant, self-sufficient orbit was one thing; but Karlson in need of a friend was another.

It was he who spoke first, however. He telephoned to me late one afternoon.

"Come and see me to-night, Dunne," he said in a low tone.

The words were a command, but the voice was an entreaty—Karlson's voice, hitherto so confident!

"Surest thing you know," I assured him, with all the energy I could put into the promise.

At eight o'clock I was stretched in his armchair before his fireplace, with his cigars at my elbow. I felt a little shiver as he lay back in the chair opposite me, just as he had done that other evening; but I put the remembrance out of my mind—only to have it brought back in all its reason-shattering impossibility by his first words.

"You remember what I told you, Dunne, about that—that queer faculty of mine?"

"Yes," I said, trying to keep my voice and face unconcerned.

"I—I—I've got to have help!" he cried, suddenly and uncontrollably, as a child might blurt out its terror. "I can't stop it! I can't help it! It's got away from me!"

There was perspiration on his forehead, and he clenched his teeth to keep them from chattering.

"My dear fellow," I said quietly, "you're not yourself. You've been working like a maniac for months, and you show it. Now pull yourself together, and you'll realize that what you've got is an attack of nerves. You can't depend on your own ideas until you let up and get into shape again."

"I'm making a fool of myself," he said, controlling himself with an effort. "But, Dunne, as Heaven hears me, the thing has got away from me. I'm likely to do it any minute, and it's getting harder and harder to undo."

"Get your nerves in shape," I repeated, because I didn't know what else to say. "Have you seen a doctor?"

"No!" he cried, and his face was pitiful. "I couldn't tell a doctor; he'd send me to an asylum."

"Don't tell him," I suggested. "Just say that you can't sleep and can't eat and can't work, and that you find yourself worrying about nothing. All that's true enough, as I can see for myself. Then do whatever he tells you; and when you're all right, I'll bet a hat you'll know as well as I do now that you've just imagined all this."

I finally got him to promise to go with me to a doctor next day; and when I left, he looked more like himself than he had for days.

V

THE next day, a turn in the case that he was trying made it impossible for him to

keep his promise. I saw him in the courtroom for a few minutes. He was looking decidedly better, and, knowing the vital importance of his presence at the trial, I felt that the visit to a doctor could be postponed for a day. I was not seriously worried about him when I went to bed that night.

And so, when I opened my newspaper at breakfast next morning, the head-line on the front page blinded and deafened me like the bursting of a shell.

GARRET KARLSON A SUICIDE!

I had to read the story twice before I understood it. Just half an hour before midnight, a shot in Karlson's room had brought the club servants, who had found him lying on the floor with the hot pistol in his hand.

He had seemed tired and unwell for some time, they told the reporters. He had had dinner at the club that evening as usual, and seemed in better spirits. He had gone out immediately afterward, had returned about nine o'clock looking alarmingly ill, but had refused the clerk's offer of attention, and gone to his room.

He had come down again about eleven o'clock, had gone to the mail-box on the corner, and returned at once to his room. He was not seen again until the shot had alarmed the house.

I sat, sick and dazed. The rest of my mail lay on the table by my plate. On top of the pile was an envelope, addressed in Karlson's characteristic hand. That must have been the letter he had gone out to post!

I got it open somehow, hiding the pieces of the envelope in my pocket for fear they

might fall under eyes that would recognize the writing. This is what I read:

DEAR DUNNE:

You know so much that you must know the rest.

You did me good. I felt so much better yesterday that I began to think I really had imagined what I feared. I went to see Ruth after dinner this evening. She has been troubled about me lately, and she threw her arms about my neck. I mean, she tried to. She couldn't touch me. I had done it before I knew, and then I couldn't undo it. It seemed to me that I should kill myself in trying. I don't know what she thought, but finally she was horribly frightened. I turned and ran, and I thought I heard her fall as the door shut.

It has taken me from then till now to get the thing loose from me. I am going to use the revolver quickly, before it comes back. It might even deflect a bullet.

If Ruth hasn't guessed, for Heaven's sake save her the horror. If she has, tell her as much as seems best.

I liked to feel that I could shut people out if I wanted to. It gave me a sort of an advantage, I thought. But for weeks I haven't dared to shake hands with anybody for fear they'd find out. I'd give anything in the world to feel my hand in a good, warm grip. The one thing in the universe I want now—even more than I want Ruth—is to stand on an even footing with other men and take all the chances they take. I never meant to shut everybody out.

Ruth Farrar never knew. I told her that Karlson had broken down from overwork, and undoubtedly was not in his right mind when she saw him. In regard to the inexplicable part of her experience, she evidently doubted her own senses.

The letter Karlson sent me was not traced, and his secret died with him.

THE SLAVE OF FEAR

I've heard the bleating of the lamb,
The senseless squawk of frightened hen;
I've seen a cur dog quit his bone—
But fear is not a thing for men.

I've seen a horse, back-galled and worn,
With straining eye and bloody bit
Pull on and on until he dropped;
If horses won't, why, men can't quit!

Though fleshly fear be craven's part,
There is a fear that's worse than that;
For he who flees from circumstance
Is traitor to the universe!

Dudley A. Bragdon

THE SPINSTER BEGINS TO LIVE

By
the Author of



"The Plaint
of a Spinster"



HAVE lost my nerve. I simply could not decide which of the men who proposed I would accept. I was afraid to choose, afraid to lose. I was afraid to take and afraid to leave—just frightened every way.

I had read and reread several of the letters. Gradually I came to like the chemist's best. He confessed that he was shy, you know. He acknowledged that his courage ran toward discovering the affinities of liquids and gases, but ran away when he tried to discover his own.

Most of the women who wrote to me advocated the ranchman; several even suggested that if I did not want him I might turn him over to them. But, of course, I could not do that. I don't know whether it is legal to run a matrimonial bureau without a license. I, too, liked the ranchman; but I have lived in the twilight of life so long that the bright glow of him rather dazed me. The big West sounded well in a letter; but I'm afraid I haven't an adventurous spirit. The chemist lives in the East; and what knowledge I have of the world is limited to the East.

But I had not the courage to write and tell him to come and see me as he suggested. It seemed so unmaidenly, so preposterous, to wait for an absolute stranger to come and look at me while I looked at him and we decided whether we would marry each other. I tried to write to him; I gave up after I had written and destroyed six letters.

I have no friends to whom I would dare confide such nonsense; but some of the women who wrote to me seemed so kind

and wise that I picked out one and wrote to her.

I told her frankly that I could write love-letters to a man I had not the courage to see; but the idea of our mutual awkwardness and embarrassment, and of the lack of softening sentiment which would mark an actual meeting, frightened me almost to death. This is a part of her answer:

Like most women, you are in love with love. You can write to him because he is just *love* in your imagination. You would probably be the most disappointed old maid in existence if you really saw the chemist!

But that isn't exactly true. I am not a creature of inspirational beauty or wonderful magnetism myself; and I know perfectly well that I should be much more sensitively observant of any evidence that he was disappointed than occupied with being disappointed myself. I wrote her that; and a letter came back which is too good to be suppressed.

MY DEAR SPINSTER:

You are probably wearing a high-busted corset and a boned waist still. Your ideas certainly belong to the vintage of the sixties. But I like you. I am a business woman in New York. I suggest that you should come here and let the bright lights of Broadway and a good dressmaker recreate you. You need some "pep." Your ideas about the tragedy of the old maid are true enough. I cried when I read them. But what's the use of moping? You have brains and write well. Why keep the fuzz on your gray matter till it mildews?

I live at a quiet hotel in a charming old square. You can come and pay your own expenses and be perfectly independent while you get waked up.

I'm a spinster, too; but I'm not "sitting with futile hands and empty heart" at the bottom of any old wall. I'm "shinning up" with the bravest. Come and have a look at how I do it!

Sincerely,

ALICE BAYARD

Somehow I have not been able to make myself feel that the men who proposed to the Spinster proposed to *me*. After what Miss Bayard wrote about being in love with love, I could see that each of them had taken me as the form on which to drape the winsome garments of his ideal of a wife. It seems to me that it would be rank imposition for me to take and wear clothes that did not really belong to me. So, with proposals all around me which I dared not accept, I decided to comply with Alice Bayard's suggestion.

II

AND NOW I am in New York. Last night, after a day of eating each meal in a different place, after riding on cars underneath the ground, upon the ground, and above the ground, I wondered if I had not been frightened more different times and ways than I possibly could have been by the chemist if I had let him come and inspect me for matrimony.

But my heart had its say. Marriage is a more momentous matter, it asserted, than getting to the Natural History Museum on the Elevated and to Wanamaker's by the subway and the Little Church Around the Corner on the surface-cars. I observed that any of those three places can be left in several ways; but matrimony has only two exits—divorce and death; and neither of the two is satisfactory and comfortable. One's heart will talk!

I know my women correspondents will be interested in the double-quick time in which Alice Bayard got me out of the easy-to-change evidences of my old-maidish mossbackiness. She is very "smart," as she calls her stylish, up-to-date method of dressing. She has a large real-estate business; and I saw her first after her return from her office. But she looked charming in a loose, poetic-looking negligee that shimmered with a coppery gleam through pale-gold chiffon.

I never saw a dress like it. I stared at it curiously; it was cut with a long V at the neck which showed her throat and a little of her breast. I am going to be frank,

and I know I am old-fashioned; but I was a bit shocked at that gown! Some golden velvet folded and wrapped around her and the chiffon so that, as she went ahead of me toward the fireplace, I could see the motion of her shoulders and back under the sheeny fabric as if it were a golden skin on her body.

But she was cordial and kind, and I could not help recognizing the fine, alert mind she possessed. We had tea; she made it and served it in delicate cups. I felt as if I were acting in a play.

Finally she looked me over carefully and said:

"Spinster, you have the makings of a very attractive woman!"

Of course, I was pleased. She had such taste herself that her judgment counted; and when she spoke like that, it seemed to me as if she were holding out a life-line, or handing me a strong stick to lean on.

Ever so many of my correspondents had congratulated me on being unmarried and still "able to keep my ideal." They evidently considered that husbands are destroyers of the ideal lover. They said that marriage and children and all the bother kept them to a narrow life and suppressed their individual talents. In spite of their warnings, my heart said that marriage was the best and finest career that a woman could have; but that it was being queerly twisted and screwed and turned from its great uses by many modern ideas which had not yet worked out to their legitimate conclusions. So when Miss Bayard promised me the gift of attractiveness, as if she were a twentieth-century fairy godmother, I reached out for it with the hope in my heart that it might help me to attain, and to make successful, the career I crave.

She asked me how old I was. When I told her, she said I was a girl. She told me her age. She was twelve years older than I, and looked ten years younger.

"It can't all be clothes!" I exclaimed.

"It isn't. It is growing instead of vegetating. It is living instead of existing. It is feeling that you are doing something, even if you are not. It is deceiving yourself, doping the mother-love, and—"

She stopped short as if she had betrayed a secret. "Doping the mother-love!" That phrase caught my attention; I knew enough slang to understand it. Involuntarily I looked at the long V of her dress, and saw the curve of her breasts be-

tween the chiffon. She saw my glance and drew the edges together.

My mind was full of whirling thoughts; but her little modest action made one of them spring into prominence. I felt a quivering hurt, a wounded sex-pride. I have never grown used to very low-cut dresses; it confused me to hear her talk of mother-love and to see her wearing a dress that cheapened the body where a baby's head might rest. I suppose I am very old-fashioned!

"Can you spend three hundred dollars on clothes?" she asked suddenly.

"I will!" I answered, lured by the thought that I might be "attractive" and the knowledge that I could have the neck of my dresses cut the way I liked them.

I had the time of my life getting the new things! I had never enjoyed anything so much. I wondered—you see, I'm being very honest and very feminine—what color the chemist liked. Alice took me to wholesale places where I got wonderful bargains. Such lingerie—and I had always worn "underclothes"! And shoes that made my own feet a joy to behold! Then a street-dress, and a dinner-gown, and a Japanese kimono of dull-blue silk—somehow I feel that the chemist likes blue, and it is my own favorite color—with wistaria and apple-blossoms embroidered on it like poems in silk thread.

Then an evening came when I was dressed in the dinner-gown, with my hair arranged in becoming and "youthifying" fashion—I read that word in a cold-cream advertisement in the subway; and it exactly describes what the new hair-dressing did for me.

I was going to dine with a man! No, not the chemist, though Alice talked about asking him in—he lives in Jersey—as if it were no more than ordering tea instead of cocoa. But I cannot do it—not yet. I was to dine with Robert Askew, a successful author who has not much money. I think Alice cares for him.

Perhaps you are wondering why I, not she, am dining with him. I do not exactly know. Last night he dropped in to sit by her gas-grate and talk about his ideals; and she was not very patient with him. Finally she answered his protest about her "nervousness" by some caustic remarks about "ideals not paying rent and grocer's bills." After that she told him that she could not dine with him, but that I would probably

enjoy going. So that's how I came to be invited.

III

At ten o'clock on the following morning I had coffee in bed—think of me doing that! Then I put on the blue kimono. I was thinking over my dinner with Mr. Askew.

I had heard more about ideals than I ever had before. I had always hidden mine as if they were criminal; but Mr. Askew talks about them as frankly as if they were church, or fancy-work, or any of the things that I have used as conversational helps. I certainly enjoyed him and his ideals; I think he knew that. I have never been so much alone with an educated and interesting man.

I wonder if the chemist would be as nice! Perhaps I will write to him to come and see me before I go home.

IV

I did not write to the chemist yesterday. I had not the time.

Alice came home from business ill, and sent for me. I found her stretched out on the couch, looking as old as I had before the hair-dresser and the blue kimono changed me. She had on a woolly pink bath-robe and a hot-water bottle was behind her neck.

She asked me whether I enjoyed Mr. Askew, and what we talked about. I told her I had never been the recipient of a man's confidences about his ideals—but I got no further. She laughed—not a very pleasant laugh; one of the raspy, edgy, mad kind that makes my back want to hunch up like a cat's.

"You poor little innocent Spinster! You were a new victim! I've been listening to those sacred confidences for three years. Perhaps he'll turn to you for sympathy because you are gentle and small and kind. No, he won't—not if I'm alive!"

She sat up suddenly and glared at me. I was too much amazed to speak. I had lived in a simple world where the things people got angry about or cried about were neighborhood fusses and death and mortgages. Perhaps I only thought my world was simple because I wasn't included in its complexities. But anyhow, I had not the remotest idea what she was crying and raging about.

"I'm going to marry him—I! This life

alone is maddening. I make more money in three months than he does in a year, but I'm not occupied; I'm only busy. And it's different—can't you understand that, Spinster?"

"You mean you're just going to marry Mr. Askew to—to get occupied?" I gasped. "Don't you love him?"

"I'm going to marry him—if I can keep his heels and head on temporal matters long enough to go through the ceremony—because I want him to love. A woman needs some one to love, I tell you. Life's as empty as a balloon without that! He is as simple as a child. He isn't one of the cynical authors doing cross-sections of life and picking out the worst parts. He writes things that make you laugh and cry and feel happy that you can feel. I'll keep on with my business, because he doesn't make enough to live as I like to live."

"Perhaps he would want to support his wife," I ventured.

She looked keenly at me, and began to smile. Then she said I certainly was old-fashioned, even if my hair was Elsie Fergusoned. But she told me it was better than having the new-fashioned kind of a heart that was heartless.

"There are lots of women nowadays who want their husbands to support them, little Spinster; but they do not mean what you mean. Your idea is that a wife should adapt herself to her husband's income; theirs is that the husband's income should adapt itself to their tastes. They are a lot of lazy grafters. You think I should live on Mr. Askew's income to save his pride from the humiliation of having his wife support herself. But, you see, I have a little pride of my own. My way of making money is decent and dignified. I have sold more than a thousand homes to people who never could have had them if I hadn't made the terms easy and practical. I couldn't pull out and stop being useful in my own way. Of course, Mr. Askew has proved himself, too. His books are not big money-makers and best-sellers; but they are fine and strong and true. We'll both keep on doing our work—and we'll have each other!"

"But what if—if there were children?" I ventured, feeling a mental seasickness as my ideas bumped and bobbed about when the current of her thought dragged them from their moorings.

"There won't be, Spinster, for reasons of

nature's own. But mother-love doesn't die; it persists in the heart of any woman worth the name. You see, if I had married at the marrying age, my children would have been grown up now. But my taste has grown, anyhow; I shouldn't care for the drudgery and grind of little folks now. But I do want some one to mother—a grown-up child."

"You don't mean that you look on Mr. Askew as a child?" I exclaimed.

"Not exactly," she answered, while the red rushed up into her pale face and made her pretty. "But I can fuss over him, and help him. I've such a lot of faith in him, in what he means to the world, in the possibilities for his personal success. I know my practical ability will piece out his inability. I have patience with his rambling self-absorption, because I know it isn't just selfishness. No woman who was not independent financially could afford him. He'd get behind in expenses; she'd worry and fret herself to death, and defeat his talent. Even when I was a girl I had the greatest admiration for artistic gifts; but I am thoroughly practical myself. I go to an artist when I want a poetic gown. I hire an expert when I want anything done. And in my own line of work I make the money to do it. Then why shouldn't I show my love for art by helping an artist to be artistic and still not starve or languish for lack of comfort and appreciation? Why shouldn't I marry him?"

"Why not?" I exclaimed enthusiastically.

A shadow came over her face; the color faded. She looked at me and then turned her eyes away, as if she were embarrassed.

"Well, you see," she said slowly, "in spite of my modernity, I am old-fashioned in one respect. Being proposed to is an ancient and valued privilege of womankind. I can't make up my mind to do the proposing."

"You! Why, Mr. Askew—"

"Doesn't," she said briefly. "He comes here and lolls before my fire, and dreams his dreams aloud, and takes coffee or cough-sirup from my hand as if it fell from heaven instead from the thought and consideration of a woman who wants to be proposed to. Sometimes it gets on my nerves frightfully. I nearly snap his head off. You heard me the other night. It's all because I want him to propose, and he doesn't do it!"

It sounds funny as I write it; but it was not. I looked about the big room which she had made so homelike and charming with her beautiful things. I looked at her. Even if she wasn't dressed up, she was convincing and capable and—yes, she was tender. I wanted to shake Mr. Askew. I said so.

"Suppose you do it!" she suggested hopefully.

The idea filled me with terror; yet I wanted to help her. Of course, I knew she did not wish me actually to shake him; but I was frightened at even trying to wake him up to the fact that he ought to propose. Suddenly, an idea came to me.

"Why don't you go away? He'll miss you; and when you come back, he'll—"

"Do you suppose I haven't thought of that? I know it's the way, if there is a way; but I'm afraid to try it. He's such a fool, such a blissful, childish, lovable fool, that some other woman would stumble over him, pick him up, and begin to coddle him at her fireside. He'd never notice that it wasn't I. I—I can't run the risk of losing him; I've got to have some one to love and to take care of!"

Many of you women will turn up your noses at such lack of independence; but I have lived too long not to have discovered that a good deal of nose-turning is what the boys call bluffing. It's foolish when you analyze it. Why should we pretend that we do not feel lonely? Why should we be ashamed to crave opportunity for the kind of usefulness for which nature fitted us?

I know how she felt, because I have felt that way so often myself. So have most of you, even if you do sneer. There's a silent sob behind that sneer!

Her idea of mother love developing till it craves grown-ups to look after and help and inspire was new to me; but it explains a whole lot. It exactly explains her. For myself, I haven't graduated from the baby-craving stage.

V

FINALLY, in spite of my fright, I really did shake Mr. Askew. I had watched them together one evening. She bossed him. Her manner was a bad cross between a stern mother's and a business man's. He submitted with a sweet indifference that irritated her all the more. I kept wondering why she was so hard and driving,

when she had dressed herself so richly and softly and with alluring femininity. If she would only act as she looked!

During the evening, Mr. Askew gave me an order on his publishers for one of his books. He signed his initials—an odd, scraggy, individual signature it was, too! I suddenly realized that it was familiar to me.

I went off to bed, leaving them alone and fussing a bit. It was her nervousness, he thought; she and I knew it was her longing to be proposed to.

That familiar group of initials teased my brain for a while, like the memory of a face I was unable to place. At last I got it. He had answered my "Plaint of a Spinster"!

I recalled how Alice had told me that she happened to know about my "Plaint." A man whom she knew had read it and brought it to her. She told me when I first came, when she referred to her letters to me.

Over and over again I dragged my mind to bring up the recollection of his letter. I knew it was not one of the proposals. Gradually I began to recall it, phrase after phrase, as I had read it with keen delight in its rarely beautiful expression. It spoke of "the heart's hunger for the small tenderesses, of fleeting hand-clasps like the airy touch of butterflies blown toward each other by the wind, just the great small things that keep the love-light on the heart's altar burning."

I almost saw the letter as if it were again before my eyes:

A man expects in his selfish way all the big things, brains and comforts; but he yearns for, and accepts with a prayer on his lips, what his heart reaches for with trembling hope—softness, sweetness, the yielding confidence of a body unlike his own crude form as it gives its silent, gracious evidence of love.

It was one of the most wonderful of the letters; and here I was seeing the great things that the writer undervalued laid at his feet. He was walking over them, and over the woman who gave them, because his heart's gaze was fixed on the dream-beckoning little things. The proposal she half blamed herself for being unable to speak would be an actual shock to him. It would bury illusion and charm fathoms deep beneath his man's revulsion and his dead imagery.

I also knew that unless she could let the sweet weight of her love-burdened heart rest in his hands so that he could see its mystery and marvel, rest there for him to keep or throw away, he never would know what she could be, what she was beneath her business outside.

Then a plan came—a plan so daring that I could not believe that I, the Spinster, was its mother. But it brought its twin along—a sturdy determination to put the plan into action. I slept with my brain-babies; and the next morning they waked me up and stirred me to achievement.

On the evening when I dined with Mr. Askew, he had read me a poem of his. I wrote and asked him for a copy of it—for Alice. I do not know whether it was just the natural response of an author's pleased vanity; but it came that very day. I accepted it as a good omen, and ran out and up to the nearest florist's shop.

I bought violets and lilies-of-the-valley. I told him in my excitement that they were flowers for a lover. He probably thought they were for my own lover. At any rate, he trotted to his ice-box and came back with maidenhair fern and two of those small, pink roses that look good enough to eat and are as fragrant as love itself should be. He made a poem of a bouquet, and congratulated me when he gave it to me.

I have to confess that I blushed like a girl—and—thought of the chemist. Yes, I did. I know I'm foolish, but, at least, I'm honest about it!

The flowers and verses I put on her desk. She was having Mr. Askew there for supper on the hearth, and I knew that she would soon be at home. Oh, yes, you may want to know what the verses were. Use them, some of you who yearn for love; they work like a charm.

If all the tiny trumpetflowers
Should blow and blow and blow,
And every singing rivulet
Would flow and flow and flow,
If every velvet bumblebee
Should boom and boom and boom,
And every radiant humming-bird
Would zoom and zoom and zoom—
If trumpetflower and rivulet
And bird and bumbling bee
Should blow and flow and boom and zoom,
They could not tell how I love thee!

I went in to help her with the salad; but I had to do it alone. I was frightened

nearly sick when I saw what the flowers and the verses had done.

She was radiant and excited and utterly useless. She had put on a white dress and looked positively girlish—or was it the light in her eyes that made the effect? She flung herself on the couch and fingered the flowers she wore at her belt. She jumped up nervously every time the elevator stopped at our floor.

Apparently I had called every little love-spirit in her from its deep retreat in her heart. Oh, if it failed! If I proved myself a blundering, soft-headed, old-maid idiot! I prayed and made the salad at the same time.

Then I realized that if things went the way I hoped they would, that particular supper-party was no place for the Spinster. I arranged the lettuce around the dish and started from behind the screen to put it on the table; but I jumped back. I heard Alice open the door and let Mr. Askew in. I clutched the plate and awaited the results of my Cupid-playing.

Mr. Askew was himself, as usual. Alice was silent. I fancy he must have been looking at her; she certainly was enough to make any man look, especially the man who was the real cause of her breathless, rosy, appealing loveliness.

"Robert! The verses! I didn't know you could write suc'r wonderful things! And the flowers! They look like the words of your poem blooming!"

Goodness me, I had liberated a lady poet! I had let her escape from the shrouding businesslikeness of Alice Bayard. If I was gasping with surprise, I wonder what Robert Askew was doing with her eyes and her breast and her voice all so close to him!

"My dear Alice—" he began in a dazed way.

He was going to fail me! He was not the real lover. He could not see the marvel before him. I started to set the salad plate down; my hands were shaking and my eyes were blinded with tears. The result was that I missed the table, and the plate crashed on the floor.

They told me the rest. I did not stay to see the two wrecks I had brought about—or thought I had. I ran like a rabbit to my own room. Alice flung herself into his arms when the crash happened.

"I'm sorry I did it!" I wailed, without looking at them, as I slid toward the door.

Of course, I meant the flowers and the verses, not the salad. But something illuminated Robert's wits. He just took a tight hold on Alice; and the beginning of the end was started.

VI

It was the day after when I saw him alone, before I had seen Alice. We were waiting for her in her room when she should come from business.

"For Heaven's sake, don't tell Alice that I didn't send the flowers with the verses! I'm going to marry her; and she'd turn me down cold if she guessed I didn't mean to—I wonder if she wore the violets I sent this morning!"

He went mooning about, looking for them, and asked me to go into her bedroom and bath-room to make sure that she had worn them. The flowers I had sent her were on a table beside her bed; but one of the two pink roses was gone—I wonder where!

When Alice came in, she told me that they were to be married as soon as she could get ready, and after the honeymoon they were going to live on Long Island, in one of the very houses she had had built for a home for somebody. Robert would have his study there in the quiet and the open; she would keep her office, and they would not bother each other all day. Then in the evening they would have each other.

"By the way, little Spinster, how nicely you and the chemist could live together. He'd be at his laboratory, and you in your own little home where you belong, all day. Then, at night—Listen, I believe I'll write him to come, if you don't. You could have a house next to ours—"

I didn't hear the rest of what she said; I was faint with fright. I scraped up enough energy to ask her how she dared take charge of other people's affairs. Then I caught Robert's eyes; he was laughing at me.

Mercy! I wonder what will happen?

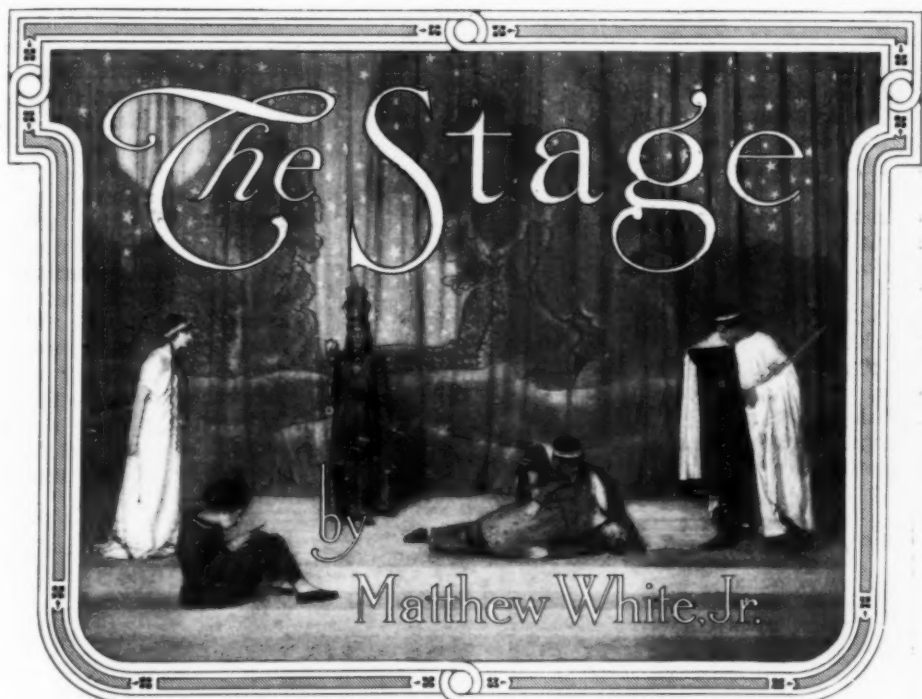
THE DAYS OF FARING

Oh, bright the days of faring
Adown a soft spring morn,
When nature's loom is spinning bloom
On tangled brae and thorn;
And winging swifts and linnets
Dart through the yellow haze
To wake the fen and haunted glen
With Maytime roundelays.

Oh, rare the days of faring
Along a sumac lane
When everything is blossoming
To worship God again;
And every wisp of sea-song
And every fragrant breeze
Is like the kiss and raptured bliss
Of sainted memories.

Ah, lass, the days of faring
Are only brave and true
Because your feet are tripping sweet
With mine o'er heather-dew;
Because your lips, like petals
Upturned of shrinking flower,
Reveal to me spring's witchery,
The secret of its power!

Gordon Johnstone



SCENE FROM THE GRANVILLE BARKER PRODUCTION OF "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"

From a photograph by White, New York

WHY do you go to the theater? I don't mean to theaters in general, but to a particular theater. In other words, what is it that determines you to see "Wayward Winnie," say, rather than "The Thrill"? Is it the advertisement in the newspaper, the comments of the critic, or what you hear about the piece from your friends?

The influence of the dramatic critic has been a debatable matter for years. Managers will tell you that the public, after all, is the court of last resort, and that they do not fear a critic's "roasts." At the same time, these same managers will hasten to blazon abroad all the good things the reviewers say about their productions.

During the season now closing two of the most quoted of the New York critics suddenly left the newspapers with which they had been associated for years. Had they been silenced by request of the managers? How can that be, when these magnates are so confident that an unfavorable review will not affect their box-office receipts?

It must be admitted that there is evidence to support the managers' contention. To cite specific examples, "The Lion and the Mouse" was flayed by practically all its reviewers, yet it ran in one theater for two years. In the present season, on the other hand, "The Big Idea" received an avalanche of good notices, yet it was withdrawn inside of a month and is now in stock. It is this sort of thing that puts theatrical producing in the same class with speculating in Wall Street.

In some respects the dramatic critic stands in a rather peculiar position. He is invited to come to the theater, to sit in the best seats the house affords, and to tell the public what he thinks of the piece. Presumably the managers expect a favorable report; for if they hadn't sufficient confidence in the play's power to induce this state of mind, they would scarcely have put it forward.

But, urge those who criticise the critic, his judgment is only one man's opinion, and is liable to be affected by many things not directly connected with the traffic on the

stage before him. He may have had an uncomfortable time in reaching the theater; he may have left a sick child at home; his head, his tooth, or his ear may ache. Is it fair, some managers have asked, that a production on which many thousands of dollars have been expended should depend for its success or failure upon a man, who, with the best intentions in the world, may have his judgment warped by some outside influence, perhaps without realizing it himself?

Some one who is in no way connected with the-

aters, dramatists, or actors said to me the other day that critics should not be admitted to see a play until it had been running for two weeks. Evidently the managers do not coincide in this view, otherwise they would not be anxious, as they all seem to be, to get the reviewers into their houses at the very first showing—sometimes at the dress rehearsal of their new ventures. If any of my readers would care to write and say what influences him or her to decide which play to see, I should be very pleased to get such letters. This maga-



LILLAH MCCARTHY AS LAVINIA IN THE GRANVILLE BARKER PRODUCTION OF BERNARD SHAW'S FABLE PLAY, "ANDROCLES AND THE LION"

From a photograph by White, New York



THE GERMAN SPIES DRINKING A TOAST "TO THE EMPEROR!" IN THE LAST ACT OF THE ENGLISH WAR PLAY, "THE WHITE FEATHER"

From a photograph by White, New York

zine circulates all over the country, and in the many one-week stands there is scarcely time to wait for the report of a hit to get "in the air." The newspaper, then, it seems to me, must be relied on as a sort of bulletin-board, even more than in such centers as New York, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia, where plays are put up for runs. But I am open to conviction, if a sufficient number of my readers will take the trouble to write and tell me why they elect to go to one show rather than another.

To return to the critics, it is conceivable that where they disagree, as they now and then do, the playgoer will be all the more impelled to visit the theater and decide for himself. But your man in the street seldom reads more than two newspapers a day.

The Granville Barker revival of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" offered fruitful subject for cogitation to any who took the trouble to look up all that was written about it.

"Mr. Barker's most bizarre extravagance," said one New York reviewer, "far from appearing obtrusive, adds a piquant charm that makes the play a splendid achievement." Capping this, came the verdict of another: "After all, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is a poem of exceeding beauty, and the soul of it cannot be expressed in action only."

From one critic, who no doubt intended to pay it high compliment, came the comment that "the whole performance is delightfully unreal." "It must be confessed,"

wrote another, alluding to the gilded fairies, "that these bronze monstrosities, with their expressionless masks and stiff movements, act as a restraint on the imagination."

"It is a new and interesting staging of a classic comedy," declared one commentator, while to another it seemed that "each person in the company

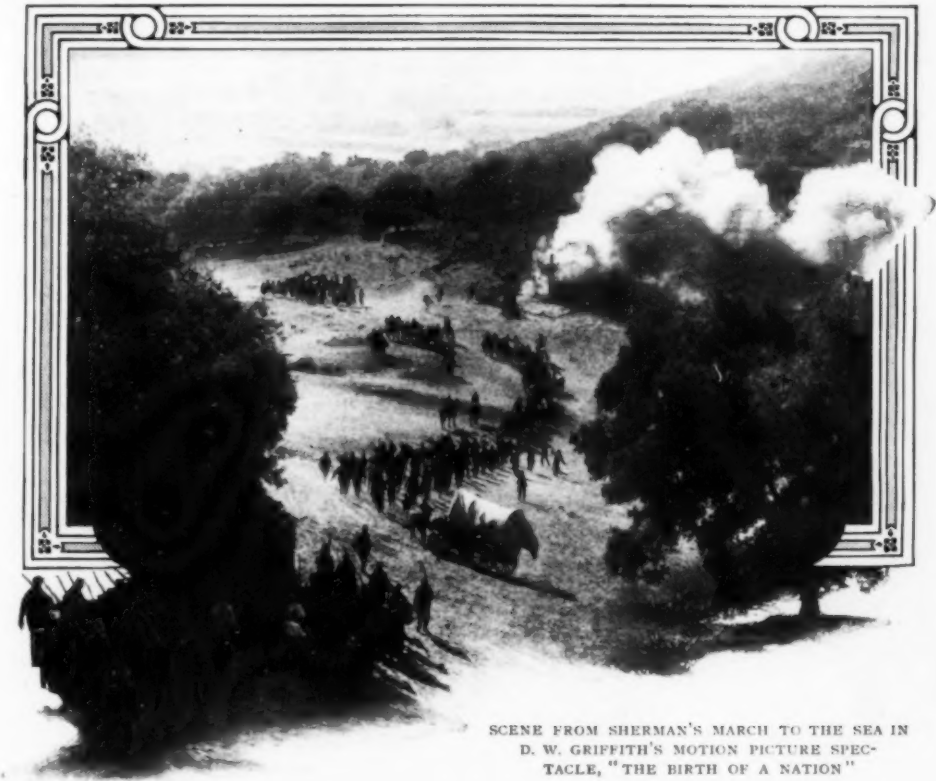
believed that it was less important to forget a line than to omit a gesture."

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" was the third Shakespeare play which Mr. Barker subjected to his "audacities," as a London critic called them in reviewing the production when given at the Savoy, February 6, 1914. The other two pieces were "The Winter's



MLLE. DAZIE AS ROMANACA, AN "AMERICAN-MADE DANCER," IN THE WINTER GARDEN SHOW, "MAID IN AMERICA"

From a photograph by White. New York



SCENE FROM SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA IN
D. W. GRIFFITH'S MOTION PICTURE SPEC-
TACLE, "THE BIRTH OF A NATION"

Tale" and "Twelfth Night." In summarizing the results attained by the Barker treatment of the three dramas, a writer for the *London Stage* observed that "one feels that it is depoeitizing, that it is wanting in the power of illusion, that it robs the acting of vitality."

After all, however, Mr. Barker is making Shakespeare popular, and surely that is much to be thankful for in these days of frivolous *revues* and flourishing fox-trot parlors.

And who can say but that in his heart of hearts Mr. Barker thinks the gilded sprites and the much-criticised fairy wreath over *Titania's* bower just as meretricious as do the most virulent detractors of these innovations? He is astute, or he would not have been successful, and to know your public is every bit as important as to possess a keen artistic sense. If to win the latter, one must now and again sacrifice the former, in the way of giving the people a bone of contention to gnaw, why, the box-office is served, and Shakespeare is glorified

of the people. Audiences crowd to see "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at Wallack's, where at this writing it is alternating with Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion."

The last two previous elaborate offerings of the "Dream" in New York were failures, so far as winning a public was concerned. One of them opened the New Amsterdam Theater, featuring Nat Goodwin as *Bottom*, October 26, 1903. The other inaugurated the Astor Theater, September 21, 1906, with Annie Russell, the star, as *Puck*. Her flitting about on wires à la *Peter Pan* supplies the most conspicuous feature of the performance, in which the *Bottom* was John Bunny, now a power in motion pictures.

The Barker productions do not cost a tithe of the sums that went to the outfitting of the earlier revivals, curtains for the most part taking the place of set scenes. Yet how much more audience-compelling are the results! For this I take off my hat to Granville Barker. He is a marvel, nothing less.

The critics were practically unanimous in the severity with which they handled "The Trap," which was frankly labeled "melodrama," but which was such bald stuff that it induced laughter, in place of thrills, at its tense moments. It was orig-

Arthur Hammerstein, who heroically offered to produce the mess, seasoned it with a cast of really remarkable fiber, with Holbrook Blinn as star, Martha Hedman featured, Tully Marshall for villain, and David Powell as lover. Besides these there



CARROLL MCCOMAS AND MACEY HARLAN AT AN EXCITING MOMENT IN THE LAST ACT OF THE WAR PLAY, "INSIDE THE LINES"

From a photograph by White, New York

inally a one-act vaudeville skit by Richard Harding Davis, entitled "Blackmail." Then Mr. Davis took unto himself a partner in Jules Eckert Goodman, and between them they managed to ruin whatever chance of success the material at hand may have afforded.

were Frederick Burton—*Bub* of "The College Widow"—in an old-man character part, and Mr. Hammerstein's clever daughter Elaine as ingénue.

Tully Marshall was the utterly contemptible husband in "Paid in Full." His depravity is equally complete in "The

Trap," but oh, what a difference in the two plays! Martha Hedman is a native of Sweden, and came to this country a few years since to appear in "The Attack" with John Mason. Mr. Blinn, who was born in San Francisco, is the son of Nellie Holbrook, well known as an actress in her day. His father was a surveyor, and educated his son at Stanford University. Young Blinn became a star in Edward Sheldon's play, "The Boss," at the Astor Theater early in 1911, and was director of the Princess Players from 1913 until their disbanding a few months since.

The dramatic critic is usually the most envied of mortals.

"What a cinch you have," his friends tell him, "seeing all the shows and never having to pay for any of them!"

But he does have to pay, and usually the payment is more difficult in proportion to the glare and glitter of the attraction. As a Manhattan reviewer remarked in the outset of his report on "Maid in America":

All Winter Garden shows appear to have one peculiarity in common—their salient features are always easy to see and difficult to describe.

The latest addition to the list goes a step farther than this, and is difficult to see as well as to describe, so thick and fast come the varying factors of which it is composed—particularly just after curtain-rise, in connection with the song "Made in the



SCENE FROM THE PLAYLET, "WAR BRIDES," WHICH HAS MADE SUCH A HIT IN VAUDEVILLE—MARY ALDEN ON THE LEFT, GERTRUDE BERKELEY IN THE CENTER, AND NAZIMOVA ON THE RIGHT



SCENE FROM THE LAST ACT OF "THE CLEVER ONES" AT THE PUNCH AND JUDY THEATER—FROM LEFT TO RIGHT THE PEOPLE ARE NOEL LESLIE, LOUISE CLOSSER HALE, ANNIE HUGHES, CHARLES DODSWORTH, AND CHARLES HAMPDEN

From a photograph by White, New York

U. S. A." Quite justifiably is J. C. Huffman in bigger type than the names of the men who wrote the piece, if a combination of vaudeville acts and feature bits intended principally to appeal to the eye can be said to have been written. And so pleasingly do the color combinations of "Maid in America" fall on the eye that I am not sure whether Melville Ellis, who designed them, should not share the black-faced letters with Mr. Huffman.

There are no stars in the cast—or everybody is a star, whichever way you choose to put it. Harry Fox has come back, but so far as I was concerned he didn't seem nearly as funny as Belle Ashlyn, doing the "Made in America French Actress." Nora Bayes was also on hand. I can't tell you why

Miss Bayes is such a winner in her line. She certainly isn't pretty, and I know any number of girls who are better singers, but she "gets them going," and what more can the management ask in a light musical entertainment?

If anybody should ask what has become of Nora Bayes's ex-husband, Jack Norworth, it may be said that he is a great success at the London Hippodrome, where he has recently given up singing about *Sister Susie's* shirt-sewing to explain, with the aid of the same composer, how "Mother's Sitting Knitting Mittens for the Navy."

Hal Forde, who sang so well in "Adele," doesn't stint on his high notes even if he is in a *revue*, while Charles J. Ross not only looks but acts *Mark Antony* to the liking

of the most exacting *Cleopatra*. Mr. Ross, who will be remembered as one of the ablest members of the famous Weber & Fields company, came from the race-track to the stage back in 1885. He was touring in the variety theaters, "doing anything from nigger acts to glove-fights," as he tells it, "when the next year at Deadwood, South Dakota, I met my wife"—Mabel Fenton. "Four days after meeting, we were married. Lucky me! We then adopted the trade-mark 'Ross and Fenton.'" But Mrs. Ross left the stage some time since.

Speaking of leaving the stage, if the Winter Garden chorus keeps on in its invasion of the auditorium, it might be as well to seat the audience on the stage and give the performers full elbow-room at the other end of the house. In the "I'm Looking for Some One's Heart" number of "Maid in America," girls with tiny flash-lamps swarm not only over the elevated runway, but down the aisles of the orchestra and balcony as well.

Our picture of Dazie shows her in the "Ballet of Color and Motion," staged with

striking effectiveness by Theodore Kosloff to open the second act of "Maid in America." Mlle. Dazie is an American dancer who began her career behind a red mask, when she was known as La Domino Rouge. She is a St. Louis girl, whose people were strenuously opposed to her taking up dancing. Her studies were pursued in Europe, and when Oscar Hammerstein inaugurated his Manhattan Opera House with grand opera, Dazie was engaged as *première danseuse*.

A critic who went agley in his prophecies was the one who said of "War Brides," when Nazimova first offered this play at the Palace, New York, January 25:

The piece proved to be a powerful sermon against war, which was excellently preached, but at the same time quite tiresome, and one hardly likely to hold the interest of vaudeville



SCENE FROM THE FIRST ACT OF "SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE," SHOWING CYRIL SCOTT IN CENTER, WITH JEANNETTE HORTON (HOLDING FOURTH KEY) ON HIS RIGHT, AND ETHEL INTROPODI AND HELEN LACKAYE ON THE STAIRS

audiences in general for the length of times it takes in the preaching.

"War Brides" was written by Marion Craig Wentworth as a magazine story. It has registered the biggest hit of the three war offerings now on view, the other two being full-length plays, "The White Feather" and "Inside the Lines." Nazimova has picked Gilda Varesi, who was so successful in "Children of Earth," to head a second company of "War Brides."

Nazimova was discovered by Henry Miller playing in her native Russian with a company of her fellow countrymen on the Bowery. This was in the spring of 1906. Mr. Miller persuaded her to study English, which she did with such industry that on the 13th of November in the same year she made her debut on Broadway in Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler." She was born at Yalta, in the Crimea, studied the violin at Odessa, then decided to take up acting, and spent four years at a dramatic school in Moscow.

The subject of our picture from "The White Feather" is a striking episode in the third act, when the four German spies in an English household drink the toast, "To the Emperor!" Carroll McComas, the heroine of the other war play, "Inside the Lines," was with Donald Brian in "The Marriage Market," has also been with Billie Burke and John Drew, and earlier in the present season was briefly seen in "The Salamander."

Macey Harlan really carries the burden of the plot for "Inside the Lines" underneath the white turban that he wears as servant to *Major-General Crandall*, commanding at Gibraltar. Mr. Harlan distinguished himself last spring as the police spy, *Paviack*, in "The Yellow Ticket." In his histrionic career he has been mixed up in intrigues against all the prominent nations excepting the United States—of which last, by the bye, he is a native, having been born in the city which seems to have so few native sons—New York. In "Kismet" he was the crafty beggar, and managers hold him in high esteem when they want somebody to plot a revolution, especially in the Latin countries, as he is at home in many tongues.

Watching Charles Hopkins in "The Clever Ones," one is impelled to paraphrase the title and apply it to Mr. Hopkins him-

self as "the lucky one." To have had a passion for the stage from childhood, and now, still in early manhood, to possess a theater of one's own, and to be blessed with so charming a wife as Violet Vivian—what more could mortal ask? But the silver spoon which Mr. Hopkins found in his mouth at birth did not help him to all this without real effort and work on his part.

Born in Philadelphia, where the Drews come from, it was only his own persistency that got him his first professional opening with John Drew in "Jack Straw." This was in 1908, while he was taking a post-graduate course at Yale, where he had been elected president of the college dramatic society.

"I had written to all the managers, explaining my experience as an amateur actor, and seeking an opening, even the humblest," said Mr. Hopkins to me, in telling of his start. "One day I received a reply from William Seymour, general stage-director for Charles Frohman, asking me to call on him at ten o'clock in the morning. He has assured me since that he gave me the job because I took the trouble to come all the way from New Haven to keep an appointment so early in the day. I was a head waiter, and as I had only one line to speak I didn't get my name on the program; but I had got my start, for couldn't I truthfully say, when I went out for something else, that I had played with John Drew?"

Mr. Hopkins's next engagement was with Ben Greet, and here he not only received the best kind of training through playing parts as varied as *Petruchio* in "The Shrew" and *Shylock* in "The Merchant of Venice," but he met in the Greet company the talented young actress who afterward became his wife and leading woman. So what mattered it to him that the arrival of salary day didn't always mean the arrival of the salary?

Calvin Thomas, now playing the young man whom Irene Fenwick really loves in "The Song of Songs," shared dressing-rooms with Mr. Hopkins at this period, and his weekly pay-envelope had direct relations with the practical question of board and lodging.

"You may imagine my feelings," Mr. Thomas told me recently, "when, as Hopkins and I were discussing the possibilities of the ghost walking, Charlie would exclaim:

"I don't care whether they pay me or

not, I'm having the chance to act just the same!"

"To be sure," Mr. Thomas added, "I didn't know at the time that he was feeding on love's young dream on the side."

After leaving Greet, Mr. Hopkins ran a stock company in Washington. During the season of 1913-1914 he was at the Fine Arts

Theater, in Chicago. In organizing the force for his Punch and Judy Theater in New York, he did not fear to surround himself with the very best talent in the market, as is evidenced by the presence

of such names on his roster as Louise Closser Hale, Edward Emery, and Annie Hughes.

Mrs. Hale—she is married to Walter



EMMA TRENTINI AND JOHN CHARLES THOMAS IN THE SECOND ACT OF "THE PEASANT GIRL"

From a photograph by Wright & Co., Detroit

Hale, the artist-actor, was born in Chicago and prepared for the stage at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. She got her first chance at Detroit, as heavy woman, and her favorite part is *Prossy*, the typewriter in Bernard Shaw's "Candida," which she did with Arnold Daly in 1903.

Annie Hughes is an English actress who first appeared here nine years ago in the farce, "Mr. Hopkinson." Contrary to the

usual habit, she did not incur the displeasure of her parents by going on the stage, but became an actress at her mother's suggestion. She was the original *Little Lord Fauntleroy* in London, and she played the star part of "The Chorus Lady" there after Rose Stahl went back to America.

Mention of Louise Closser having studied at a dramatic school reminds me that I have just been looking over a catalogue of

the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, after witnessing a performance of the students at an Empire Theater matinée. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and neither the

work of the actors at this performance nor the list of accomplishments taught at the institution is one-quarter as eloquent in speaking the worth of such a school as are the many portraits of players now before the public scattered through the booklet with the date of their graduation appended to their names. I find here the faces of

Grace George, Doris Keane, George Fawcett, Alice Fischer, Brandon Tynan, and Campbell Gollan, to mention only a few. Two sentences in the catalogue stand out as witnesses to the fact that an honestly directed training-school of this sort is no catch-penny device for the dollars of the stage-struck:

It is to the interest of the applicant to be honestly advised against entering a profession in which there



BEATRICE PRENTICE, WHO IS DORIS MARRABLE IN "THE CLEVER ONES" AT THE PUNCH AND JUDY THEATER

From a photograph by Rentlinger, Paris

may be no opening for him. Many applicants every year are warned against entering a profession for which they are physically or mentally unqualified.

I note in the curriculum a department of health. I hope that its text-books contain an anti-obesity recipe. One or two of the players in the performance that I saw the other afternoon must either secure some such remedy or confine themselves to character rôles.

"The Ladies' Shakespeare," in which we show Maude Adams, on this page is a fifty-minute version of "The Taming of the Shrew" made by Sir James Barrie to fill out the bill with his "Legend of Leonora." The latter piece has been revised for the second time, and now lasts something less than an hour and a half. Broadway has not yet seen "The Ladies' Shakespeare," although Brooklyn has.

Alternating with this double bill, Miss Adams is presenting on her tour this season another Barrie play, "Quality Street," in which we saw her fifteen years ago. There is a peculiar appropriateness in its revival at this period of the Waterloo centenary, as its scene is laid during England's participation in the Napoleonic wars.

Maude Adams's real name is Kiskadden, Adams being that of her mother, Annie Adams, who was leading woman at the Salt Lake Theater in the late sixties. Maude was born in that unique community November 11, 1872, and is set down in the English "Who's Who in the Theater" as "probably the most popular actress on the American stage to-day," with riding as her favorite amusement.

WHEREIN "THE BIRTH OF A NATION" EXCELS

The two-dollar movie has been achieved at last. That is to say,



MAUDE ADAMS IN "THE LADIES' SHAKESPEARE," BY BARRIE, WHICH SHE IS PLAYING ON TOUR THIS SEASON WITH HIS "LEGEND OF LEONORA" AND "QUALITY STREET"

From a photograph—copyrighted by Charles Frohman, New York

you may go to the Liberty, and by selecting a seat at the rear of the house for "The Birth of a Nation" you can have the privilege of paying just as much for it as you paid to see Douglas Fairbanks in "He Comes Up Smiling" from the same point of vantage.

"But is it worth two dollars?" you ask.

Well, if you consider that the pictures are said to have taken eight months in the making, and that fifteen thousand people posed for them, five dollars a seat would not seem to be an exorbitant charge. Whether you will get two dollars' worth of enjoyment out of seeing "The Birth of a Nation" must be left for individual decision. But enjoyment is scarcely the word to apply to what is, in its best features, a historical sketch of the Civil War period in the United States. Tragedy dire and dreadful stalks through the film from the vivid hand-to-hand fights in the trenches before Petersburg to the assassination of Lincoln in Ford's Theater just fifty years ago.

Marvelous in its realism is the presentment of the latter episode. We see the auditorium, and portions of the play; we watch the President arrive and receive the greetings of the audience. We note that he draws a cloak about his shoulders as the April air turns chill. We get a glimpse of the guard seated just outside the Presidential box, and see his desertion of his post in order to peep at the play. Then Wilkes Booth enters the box, fires the fatal shot, and makes his twelve-foot leap to the stage. All this is of the tensest possible interest, and a scene which, with its wealth of detail, would be quite impossible to present in the ordinary way.

Even more wonderful than this are the battle episodes, with a vista of miles over which troops gallop, armies deploy, and charges are made. Picturesque effects galore are attained by the wizard of the silent drama, David W. Griffith, who is said to have invented most of the innovations in moving pictures, and is rated the highest-salaried man in the business. He is presenting "The Birth of a Nation" on his own account.

Mr. Griffith is under forty, and was born near Louisville, Kentucky, his father having been a general in the Confederate army. He was formerly an actor, at one time playing in a revival of "Caste," made by the

firm which produced "The Clansman"—on which Kuklux play by Thomas Dixon, done at the same Liberty Theater in 1906, "The Birth of a Nation" was based. The scenes that are wholly Griffith's are so much better than the Dixon part of the story that it is a pity the latter should have been included at all. "The Clansman" partakes of the cheap "chase" features which have done more than anything else to belittle the motion-picture industry. As this is confined to the second half of the bill, however, you may leave before it comes on, if you like, and still feel that you have had the worth of your money. It should perhaps be mentioned that the two-dollar tariff applies to only a small part of the house; most of the seats cost one dollar, or less.

A COLD SHOULDER TO THE EARLY GEORGIAN

For something like two years certain managers have been telling us that a revival of the costume play was impending. Perhaps with a view of hastening its advent—or is it merely by way of feeling out whether the public really wants powder, ruffles, and laces, or not?—Joseph Brooks resurrected "The Adventure of Lady Ursula," presenting Phyllis Neilson-Terry in the part created at the old Lyceum, in 1898, by Virginia Harned. My records do not indicate that this first play by Anthony Hope was an overwhelming success, for Mr. Sothorn, who starred in it, replaced it with "A Colonial Girl," before November.

To-day, opinions on the value of Miss Neilson-Terry's work differ, but there is not sufficient enthusiasm for the play to indicate any marked desire to see the costume drama come into its own again. I fear the present age is too materialistic. The telephone, the automobile, and other modern inventions have given us short cuts in so many directions that the formality and stiffness of the early Georgian period have a tendency to slow up the action.

Miss Neilson-Terry, it will be recalled, is the daughter of Fred Terry—Ellen's brother—and of Julia Neilson, whose greatest success was "The Scarlet Pimpernel," written by the Baroness Orczy, author of the book-length novel in the present issue of THE MUNSEY. The young English actress came to America for the first time last autumn, to play in "Twelfth Night" under the Lieblers. The failure of that firm made

it possible for her to fill her present engagement with Joseph Brooks, whose daughter, Virginia Fox Brooks, makes a very likable figure of *Dorothy Fenton*. Miss Neilson-Terry, by the way, is to be the *Trilby* in

at least as long as "The Firefly" and "Naughty Marietta," the last two previous vehicles of the diminutive prima donna, Emma Trentini, whom Oscar Hammerstein introduced to us in opera at the Manhattan



PHYLLIS NEILSON-TERRY AND VIRGINIA FOX BROOKS IN THE REVIVAL OF THE ANTHONY HOPE COSTUME PLAY, "THE ADVENTURE OF LADY URSULA"

From a photograph by White, New York

the impending revival of that sensation of its day.

PEOPLE IN "THE PEASANT GIRL"

"The Peasant Girl" is a very pleasant girl indeed, and gives promise of lasting

something like seven years ago. It may be the last thing we shall get from Vienna in some time.

"Polenblut" (Polish Blood) it was called over there, and the music was written by Oskar Nedbal. The libretto is by Leo

Stein, who had a share in that of "The Merry Widow," and has been done over for America—just why is scarcely apparent, as the locale is not changed—by Edgar B. Smith. New song numbers have been furnished by Rudolf Friml, composer of "The Firefly."



ELIZABETH NELSON AND SAM B. HARDY IN
THE LAST ACT OF EDWARD PEPPE'S FARCE HIT, "A PAIR
OF SIXES," WHICH FIVE COMPANIES ARE PLAYING

From a photograph by White, New York

The story of Trentini is an instance of success gained in spite of a serious physical handicap. Gifted with a fine voice, the little singer's diminutive stature sadly limits her repertoire in grand opera. Luckily she has the abundant spirits that equip her well for the lighter variety, in which she has gained wide popularity.

She comes of poor people in Mantua, Italy, where her singing is said to have been overheard by a passer-by as she was sweeping off the front steps of their humble home. The passer-by happened to be a *maestro*, and he interested himself in the girl to the extent of seeing that her voice was cultivated.

Practically costar with Trentini in "The Peasant Girl" is Clifton Crawford, who left us eighteen months ago to go to London and sing in "After the Girl"—a Gaiety show, by the bye, which has not yet been produced here. Mr. Crawford was born in Scotland and is a most versatile individual. Everybody knows his gift for comedy. He is a universal favorite in that line; but over and above this he is clever enough at the piano to be able to make money playing it, and is no mean specimen of a composer, having to his credit, among many other songs "Nancy Brown," with which Marie Cahill made such a riotous hit in "The Wild Rose," back in 1902. Both the words and music of "Mary Had a Lamb" in "The Peasant Girl" are his, and his dancing with Frances Pritchard brings well to the fore another of his strong points.

There is yet another—one which stage limitations haven't permitted him to pass over the footlights. This is golf-playing. It was while Mr. Crawford was exploiting his skill with driver and putter at country clubs around Boston that he fell in with R. A. Barnet, who wrote "1492," and so drifted back to the stage, where his parents on the other side of the sea were quite at home.

New York first began to notice him in "Foxy Grandpa."

Then, in 1903, he was the *Mayor of Chatham* in "Mother Goose," the big spectacle at the New Amsterdam; and after that he created something of a sensation by making Kipling popular in vaudeville with his recitations of "Gunga Din." In 1911 he was back in musical comedy as star of "The Quaker Girl," wherein, as *Tony Chute*, he added a host of new admirers to his thousands of old ones.

Pronounced success in "The Peasant Girl" was also achieved by the barytone John Charles Thomas as *Bolo*, the impoverished nobleman whose good looks attract the women away from their other lovers. Mr. Thomas is the son of a Methodist clergyman in Baltimore, where he was wont to sing in church choirs until he decided to enter the concert field. So he came to New York, where he was told that he could not secure an engagement until he had some experience.

"But how can I obtain experience if I can't get a chance to start in?" he naturally inquired.

A shoulder shrug was the only reply. Rebuffed at this point, young Thomas decided to try the light-opera field; so he went to the offices of Henry W. Savage and asked them to test his voice. The result was an engagement to sing the rôle of *Passion* in "Everywoman"; but as this was the second year of the play, he got no chance to appear on Broadway. He achieved this the next season, but only with two small parts in "The Passing Show of 1913" at the Winter Garden.

The following spring found him more happily placed with the Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, where among others he had a chance to sing his favorite part, *Strephon* in "Iolanthe." Last summer he joined the Edward Temple Opera Company at Olympic Park in Newark, New Jersey; and that engagement was indirectly the cause of his being picked for the part opposite Trentini in "The Peasant Girl," which has made him a happy find for Manhattan.

Another newcomer scoring in "The Peasant Girl" is Frances Pritchard, whose dancing with Mr. Crawford has already been mentioned. She is a Bostonian who determined to become an actress and came to New York, where she finally secured an opening in one of the innumerable small-time vaudeville houses with which the big

city is dotted. Then her dancing ability took her to the cabarets, whence she was plucked to become *Celeste* in "The Peasant Girl." Her success has made it certain that the cabarets will know her no more.

TWO HOLD-OVER HITS

Among the pictures this month you will find two of last season's plays, both farces, which have achieved the distinction of playing into their second year with more than one company. Indeed, "A Pair of Sixes," by Edward Peple, has five troupes presenting it in different parts of the country. The scene on page 736 shows Sam B. Hardy and Elizabeth Nelson as *Nettleton* and *Mrs. Nettleton* in the last act, as they played it in the Chicago cast from September to the end of the year. Since then the company has moved to Boston, where at this writing it is in its twelfth week.

Sam Hardy is one result of David Belasco's proclamation, some few years ago, of his intention to secure promising men from the colleges and train them for the stage. Young Hardy heard of this, came down from New Haven, passed the ordeal of "sizing up," and was assigned to the rôle of a British officer in "Sweet Kitty Bellairs." After that he became the *Gibson Man* in "The Education of Mr. Pipp." He was *Rodney Blake* with Douglas Fairbanks in "Hawthorne of the U. S. A.," and after that he played the lead in the Chicago company doing "Stop Thief."

Elizabeth Nelson rose from the ranks of the chorus. One of the ten show-girls in "Mme. Sherry," she was promoted to a principalship in one of the road companies. Like Marie Tempest, Elsie Ferguson, and many others, she soon stepped over into straight comedy; and after a while she went on tour in the feminine lead with "Ready Money." She has been the *Mrs. Nettleton* in both the New York and Chicago companies of "A Pair of Sixes," and has been selected by Mr. Frazee to play the lead in Fred Jackson's farce, "Keep Moving."

As I write, "Seven Keys to Baldpate" is being shown at the two extremes of the continent, one company playing San Francisco, the other Philadelphia. Cyril Scott is with the first-named in the rôle of *Magee*, originated by Wallace Eddinger. Mr. Scott is of Irish birth, and was for several

seasons leading juvenile in two metropolitan stock companies, first at the old Lyceum, and later at the Empire. Next, by way of a surprise to everybody, in 1894, he went into musical comedy, appearing first with De Wolf Hopper as *Jack Alden* in "Dr. Syntax," and three years later joining Augustin Daly, with whose audiences he became a great favorite for his work in "The Circus Girl," "The Geisha," and "A Runaway Girl." On Mr. Daly's death in 1899, Scott went back into straight drama. In 1905 he scored a hit in Edward Peple's "Prince Chap," and in 1909 another in the farce "The Lottery Man."

A startling announcement with regard to Mr. Scott, back in 1900, ran to this effect:

After Monday next Mr. Cyril Scott will play Miss Virginia Earle's rôle in "The Casino Girl."

No, he hadn't elected to become a female impersonator, but as Miss Earle was needed in Boston for rehearsals of the piece billed to follow "The Casino Girl," her part in the latter was changed into that of a real man, and allotted to Mr. Scott.

Helen Lackaye, who also figures in the "Seven Keys to Baldpate" picture, is a sister to Wilton Lackaye, who of late has been posing for the movies, but is to fill his old part of *Svengali* in the "Trilby" revival. Jeannette Horton, another of the group, was the petted beauty, *Ethel Hargen*, with Rose Stahl in "Maggie Pepper."

WHEN CUPID PLAYED IN "STRONGHEART"

On page 732 is a portrait of Beatrice Prentice, now playing *Doris Marrable* in "The Clever Ones" at the Punch and Judy Theater, New York. She was also in "Maggie Pepper," as *Zaza*, the little girl whom *Maggie* befriends.

It was the late Henry B. Harris, manager for Rose Stahl, who gave Miss Prentice her first chance, with a tiny part in "Strongheart" the last season Robert Edeson played it. Like so many beginners, Miss Prentice had tramped from office to office, seeking an opening, undismayed by the constant "Nothing here," until finally her persistence was rewarded. Last year she had the lead in the Western company doing "The Lure," and she came into New York in the autumn with Nazimova in "That Sort."

Miss Prentice is a Brooklyn girl, and when playing in "Strongheart" she met

and married Harrison Ford, a young actor who also received his start with Robert Edeson. They are a very happy couple, although they have never played in the same company since "Strongheart" closed. Mr. Ford, who comes from St. Louis, was with the Princess Players when they inaugurated their enterprise two years ago, and this season is featured with Louis Mann in "The Bubble."

YET ANOTHER SHOW OF GIRLS AND GLITTER

The war contributes the prettiest number to "Fads and Fancies," in "We'll Take Care of You Here," sung by Madge Lessing to a collection of kiddies dressed to represent the warring countries of Europe. "When in doubt play children" is a good rule for your musical-comedy producer. Coming away from the theater, I heard a woman remark that she thought the number was repeated too often, but I think she would have found few in the audience to agree with her.

Another outstanding feature in this musical medley by the Klaw & Erlanger Entertainers is the Ford car skit by the black-face vaudeville team, Conroy and Lemaire, well known for the fun they have managed to extract out of an insurance policy. The automobile, as a matter of fact, dominates this show, which the management, I believe, does not care to have regarded as a *revue*. Well, as no other plays are travestied, it probably isn't just that; but the plot gets lost soon after the opening scene, so we may be pardoned for confounding it with a Winter Garden or a Ziegfeld annual garden of girls. Of the latter article, by the way, there is a bewilderingly beautiful array in "Fads and Fancies," which was strung together by Glen MacDonough to the music of Raymond Hubbell.

We have come to regard Madge Lessing as an American, and to speak of her return here from London as a home-coming; but as a matter of fact London is where she was born. She came to America in the early nineties, and her first appearance on the stage was made at the old Koster & Bial's, on Twenty-Third Street. Here she was so successful that Canary & Lederer engaged her for the Casino, where, among many other parts, she played the title-rôle in "Jack and the Beanstalk." Later she went with Francis Wilson, and then London requisitioned her for the *Sleeping*

Beauty in the Drury Lane pantomime of that name. In 1908 she was in the famous Olympia production of "The Prince of Pilsen" in Paris.

A pleasing feature of "Fads and Fancies" is the dancing of Lydia Lopokova, the young Russian girl—she is little more than twenty—who learned English that she might appear in the comedy, "Just Herself" at the Playhouse last winter. It failed, but that was not the star's fault. Her training began in Petrograd when she was only ten. In 1909 she was in the Ballet Russe in Paris, and shortly afterward she came to America. In the "Fads and Fancies" cast she is listed as the *Spirit of Pleasure*.

DISCREDITING THE CRITICS

A new phase in the relations between the critics and the managers was entered upon when Lou-Tellegen came to New York in his second venture of the season. A month or so ago I told you this was to be called "A Charming Fellow," a literal translation of its title in the original German. Foolishly, this was changed to "Taking Chances," and then, fearing lest the reviewers might pun on the name, the Shuberts decided to anticipate them by publishing in the advertisements, on the morning after the New York opening, a statement which led off as follows:

Do not believe everything you see in the notices to-day. Although some of the critics, lacking in humor, may try to make you believe there is something just a little bit off the line in "Taking Chances," the management is not taking any chances in extending its assurance to you that this impression is decidedly wrong.

The joke of it was that none of the critics said any such thing. They took quite the contrary ground, claiming that the comedy had been spoiled in the attempt to make it less off-color than it was in the German version. For instance, one of them declared:

The complaint here registered against this all-important second act is not that it is vulgar, but that it is quite tedious.

Another, after boldly asserting that "nobody really objects to risqué situations humorously conveyed, except the people who never go to the theater anyway," pronounced "Taking Chances" to be "tepid with the effect of lukewarm soda-water."

More's the pity, as the idea of the piece

holds out promise of good farce, and it has been put upon the stage with infinite pains by J. H. Benrimo, coauthor of "The Yellow Jacket." Whether the management will now cut loose and play the thing in a direct translation from the German is not known at this writing.

A NEW SETTING FOR THE MOVIES

The motion picture, having ousted men and women players from the theater, has now driven the horse out of the Hippodrome. A new policy was recently inaugurated at this great New York temple of amusement which made it possible to mark the top-notch price for seats as low as fifty cents, with a minimum of ten cents. Mrs. Leslie Carter, swinging from the bell-clapper in "The Heart of Maryland," was the initial feature attraction in the picture line, with William Farnum in "The Nigger" billed to follow the next week.

But the Shuberts do not rely on pictures alone in their new departure. They have secured as director Edward P. Temple, who occupied the same post when the Hippodrome was first opened just ten years ago; and surely a movie entertainment *de luxe* is what you get in what was once the home of the plunging horses and the nimble-footed ballet. Two illuminated fountains play in the great tank, behind which is a symphony orchestra under the leadership of John McGhie, while still farther back is the stage, with a screen for the pictures. There are also a large chorus and several soloists. Of these last the best is the tenor, Vernon Dalhart, who sings a serenade from a moving gondola in true Venetian style. The same craft is also utilized for the barcarole from "Tales of Hoffman." Then there is Neptune rising from the waters in the marvelous fashion for which the Hippodrome long ago became famous—all this in addition to extra pictures, such as the Vanderbilt Cup race at the San Francisco Fair, foreign views, and comics.

The resort to movies at the Hippodrome was announced as merely temporary, but I do not hesitate to prophesy that this deft combination of screen, tank, and concert features will continue as the permanent policy of a house which has been something of a white elephant on account of the enormous expense involved in operating it. Under the new arrangement it can be kept open in summer as well as winter, and on Sundays as well as week-days.

Light Verse

THE BALANCED RATION

I KNOW it is considered wise
And quite the latest fashion
To study dietetic books
And eat a "balanced ration."

I've listened to the scientists
Who, with most learned expoundings,
Bemoan the ills arising from
A lack of right compoundings.

I've read that high efficiency
Is not all due to breeding,
But is dependent largely on
A proper line of feeding.

I have been told just how much starch,
Peptones, and carbohydrates
A man must daily eat to have
The strength that can defy fates.

And yet my breakfast was composed
Of wheat-cakes and molasses,
Washed down with what in restaurants
Too oft for coffee passes.

I lunched on pie—the corn-starch sort
That masquerades as custard;
And dined on rolls I split in half
And thinly spread with mustard.

The "balanced ration" I respect,
And have no wish to knock it;
But I must eat according to
The cash that's in my pocket!

W. Y. Sheppard

HIS HEART

OF modern man's anatomy
The most eccentric part
Is that unanchored bit of him
He's taught to call his heart.

It may be good, it may be bad,
It may be warm or cold;
It may be hard as adamant,
It may be pure as gold.

Sometimes he finds it in his mouth—
At sudden fear it shoots—
And if he's mad or out of sorts,
It sinks down in his boots.

But when his roving eyes alight
Upon a pretty Eve,
He takes it out quite brazenly,
And wears it on his sleeve.

It's lost and found a dozen times,
From height to depth it whirls
And, at the last, in Hymen's mart
It's traded for some girl's!

Rose Trumbull

BROKEN TROTH

HE sealed our engagement with gum,
And I promised to grow up fast;
Before my sixth birthday had come
He sealed our engagement with gum—
Then he wed in a year! I was dumb
When I found a man's vow does not last.
He sealed our engagement with gum,
And I promised to grow up fast!

Ruth E. Henderson

POSSUM-HUNTIN'

OH, it's chase de possum in de dark, dark night,
When de houn'-dogs' eyes shine fierce an'
bright;
When it's—"Hi dar, nigger, hump it up dat tree!"
De littles' boy mus' climb it, an' I know dat's me;
So I climbs an' I climbs till de sapling bends,
An' ole Mister Possum joins his dee-funct friends.
Oh, dere's work for little niggers on a possum
night!
But he sho' am scrumptious when he's roasted
right!
Yum-m-m-m-m-m!

Marion Delamater Freeman

THE BUSY MOTH

OH, the busy little moth, boring bung-holes
into cloth; eating up a dozen shirts while
their owner's off to church; chewing up a yard
of silk while the maid is out to milk; gnawing lining
out of cloaks, biting collars off our coats; dining
on a stack of socks, masticating sister's frocks;
eating dresses à la carte, picking out the choicest
part; banqueting in royal style on my mother's
laundry pile! Susie's waist with velvet trim made
a two-course meal for him; for the first he ate the
skirt, downed the trimming for dessert. He begins
at earliest dawn; takes for breakfast silk or lawn;

dinner is his heavy feast, then he likes a quilt, at least; but for supper just a sheet—heavy suppers banish sleep. Though dyspeptic, still he feels he must eat between his meals; so I kind of have a hunch he enjoys a constant lunch. Talk about your billy-goat, with his avaricious throat! When it comes to downing cloth, hats off to the little moth!

J. Edward Tuft

A TASTE OF FAME

WE hailed him poet in those days,
And wreathed his proud young head with
bays;
Then suddenly he dropped from sight,
And sang no more for our delight.

I met him recently—grown stout,
Red, sleepy-eyed, inclined to gout;
Was something "in the ribbon line,"
He said, and asked me home to dine.

I marked our bay-wreath on his wall.
It, too, had changed, was shrunken, small.
"Don't think," he laughed, "I keep that crown
In memory of a boy's renown;

"Not I! My wife's the thrifty kind—
For anything some use she'll find;
And many a fragrant Irish stew
That wreath's supplied a flavor to!"

Ernest De L. Pierson

THE YOUNG MOTHER

UPON a magic boat of dreams
I sail away from sordid care
Across a vast, untroubled sea—
I know not where.

Here is no hint of common things—
Of darning socks, of spools to wind;
For these I deem it best to leave
Far, far behind.

Too soon, alas, my trip is o'er;
No foreign strand draws even nigh;
My ship's becalmed! My baby boy
Begins to cry!

But presently again, when all is still,
I board my barge once more, to rove at will.

C. S. Montanye

THE BALLAD OF JAMES ENDICOTT

I WAS a good New England child;
I went to school at three;
'Twas there I met James Endicott,
Who shared a bench with me.

He bought me gum and pickled limes,
And there behind a book—
His big geography—we ate,
And guilty pleasure took.

At ten we went to dancing-school;
From out the girlish band
For seven dances out of twelve
James always sought my hand.

And once, behind a sheltering palm,
While all the rest waltzed by,
James clutched me to his manly breast
And kissed me on the eye!

When James to Harvard went away,
For tears I scarce could speak;
To say he missed me every hour
He wrote me every week.

Art, with my love, was long and bleak,
For lofty were his aims;
The day he hung his shingle, I
Was thirty—so was James.

About my waning taper still
Fluttered a moth or two;
James boldly shoved them all away
And settled down to woo.

James Endicott had large, wan eyes
That followed me about;
He had a mournful, pleading voice
That never did speak out.

When six more years had whizzed away—
James must have heard them whizz—
He took the bit between his teeth
And asked, would I be his?

If, as there turned to thinnest air
My fears of spinsterhood,
I did not shout for joy, 'twas proof
My training had been good.
James never saw me bat an eye—
I only said *I would!*

Edith Orr

OLYMPIC GAMES

BELINDA has a Grecian nose,
Her Algernon, a Roman;
So when they kiss, it is a sort
Of ancient Græco-Roman sport.

Thus when they find Belinda's pa
Has frigidly been looking on,
Belinda screams, and Algy starts
The old historic Marathon.

Joseph P. Hanrahan

A DOMESTIC WONDER

"THE aim was true and unerring,"
He explained to his loving wife;
"But the ball struck one of his buttons,
And he thereby saved his life."

Said she: "How it makes me shudder!
Oh, why did you tell me, John?"
And he meekly answered: "Darling,
The button must have been on!"

Eugene C. Dolson

THE JOB AND THE JEWELS

BY R. K. CULVER



HE warden's key clicked in the lock, and as the massive steel door swung wide, Kennedy stepped forth a free man. For a moment he stood fumbling his hat.

"No more borrowed jewelry for mine!" he said. "I learned my little lesson, and I learned it good. If anybody asks you, tell 'em I'm on the level now."

The warden laid a friendly hand upon his shoulder.

"I understand," said he; "but you're up against a hard fight, Kennedy. You won't be out of here more than a day or so before some former pal will try to get you back into the crooked game."

"Leave it to me," said Kennedy. "I been doin' some thinkin'. There won't nobody ever start me on a crooked job again. I'm through!"

The warden smiled.

"That's what they all say. I'm just telling you—telling you for your own good, Kennedy. I wish you luck; but steer clear of the old gang. Keep busy. Get some steady work and save your coin—it's a whole lot easier to be honest when you've got money in your pocket."

"Sure, that's the dope!"

With a parting hand-shake, Kennedy walked down the long stone stairway out into the world of choice and chance.

That evening, as he strolled along a by-street, a figure stepped out from the shadow of a doorway as he passed. For half a square it slunk behind, keeping its distance carefully; then quickening its pace, it approached him boldly.

"Kid Kennedy," exclaimed a voice, "or I'm seein' things! At first I couldn't believe it was you. Welcome to our city, Kid! You ain't forgot your old pal, Spider Murray? Mitt me, Kiddo, mitt me!"

Kennedy's first impulse was to hurry on regardless of the greeting. He knew Spider

Murray as the most accomplished second-story worker in the city, and also as the smoothest, most persuasive talker with whom he had ever had occasion to discuss the dangerous details of a burglary.

Upon second thought this knowledge tempted him to put his recent resolution to the test. It would be a case of diamond cut diamond. After this meeting he would know. So he turned and greeted Murray as of old time.

Former relations reestablished—outwardly, at least—the two walked on, conversing in subdued tones. Rounding a corner, they proceeded down a wider street. There were more people here; in one place a little crowd had gathered. From that quarter, and above the rumble of the street-cars, came the booming of a bass drum, and other sounds, as from ancient instruments of brass played not too tunelessly but with an ardor not to be mistaken. Mingled with them was the jingling of tambourines, and human voices rising stridently but fervently in song.

"A lot of bums," said Murray, "all hollerin' 'halleluiahs' for a handout at the barracks afterward. I know that game! There ain't one of 'em got the nerve to pry a window open and take what belongs to him. Come on, Kid, let's blow around to Dago Joe's—I got the price. The booze is as good as ever there, and I guess you hate that stuff! I guess you wouldn't like a snootful after the water-wagon trip."

"All right," said Kennedy. "But did you hear what that guy over there said? I guess they ain't all bums—not all of them."

"Come on, Kid," urged Murray, "before you offer up a prayer. You look like you need a drink bad."

And so they went to Dago Joe's. Murray ordered whisky straight, but Kennedy took beer, and sipped it slowly as the conversation trended toward the testing-point.

"Say, Kid," said Murray finally, "I got a proposition all framed up—a string of rocks as big as marbles."

He glanced cautiously about, and, leaning across the table, whispered the alluring details. Kennedy listened closely.

"And I guess your share of what them sparklers would bring wouldn't come in handy about now, eh, Kid? I guess not!" Murray settled back in his chair with an air of confidence. "So here's your chance, Kid. Wha' d'ye say?"

"Put it off a while," said Kennedy. "I got some other things to do first. I ain't quite broke. I got enough to keep me goin' till I can look around some."

"Say, you're gettin' awful cagey," Murray eyed him narrowly. "But I been a pal of yours too long to break with you now. Take your time and think it over. We'll meet again to-morrow—you can't lose me, Kid!"

A square away from Dago Joe's the two separated and disappeared in different directions.

II

THE next evening Murray sauntered down the same street into which he and Kennedy had turned after their meeting of the night before. Ahead of him a little crowd had gathered at the curb. As he approached, he heard a voice he thought he recognized. A few steps nearer he caught the words:

"So them's my sentiments."

"Amen, brother!" other voices shouted. "Halleluiah!"

The Spider edged in closer. Before him, cap in hand, stood Kennedy. Murray motioned him aside.

"Say, Kid," said he, "have you gone bugs? What's the meaning of this halleluiah stuff? You never was that way before, and it don't listen good to me. If you're stallin' for a handout, say so, and I'll stake you to a reg'lar feed. I don't get your play, Kid. There ain't no coin in this game."

"I don't need money just now," Kennedy said cheerfully. "I got a job this morning washin' crockery in a feed-dump up the line at one fifty per and eats. I ain't worryin' any."

A glint of suspicion shone in Murray's gimlet eyes.

"Bunk! You can't string me! To-morrow you'll be sorry you didn't listen to

me, Kid—that's all"; and turning on his heel, he walked away.

The evening papers of the following day contained a piece of news which was no news to Murray, and no surprise to Kennedy. It concerned a "daring burglary" which had resulted in the disappearance of a much-prized piece of jewelry belonging to Mrs. Norman Martin, a "well-known member of the exclusive social set." The details of the robbery—the manner of the burglar's entrance to Mrs. Norman Martin's residence, the location of the jewel-case, and the description of the gems—all reminded Kennedy of certain information which Murray had imparted during their talk at Dago Joe's. He frowned knowingly as he laid the paper down.

Meanwhile Murray, sitting in his room, read the article complacently and rolled another cigarette. His gaze wandered to the toe of one of a pair of tan shoes, apparently thrown carelessly aside. Picking up the shoe, he emptied out of it a diamond necklace. *

"Some twinklers!" he gloated audibly, spreading the string of jewels across the heavy, black type that headed the story of the burglary. "They ought to bring at least five thousand after the noise blows over."

Dropping the diamonds into the high-topped tan again, he replaced the innocent-looking shoe, tilting it against its fellow with a studied carelessness.

"Safer than a bank-vault," he remarked. "And it ain't the first time the old kick has held the goods!"

A week passed before Kennedy and Murray met.

"I see you been promoted," said Murray tauntingly, as Kennedy unstrapped a bass drum, set it in the gutter, removed his cap, and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "You're sure some musician, Kid!" Then, drawing closer, he whispered behind his hand: "I'm strollin' round to Fency Conway's joint to-night to see about exchangin' a little piece of jewelry, later, for about five thou'. That beats washin' dishes, Kid!"

He vanished through the crowd.

An hour later Kennedy, his cap pulled low about his eyes, walked cautiously along a narrow side street with the air of one engaged upon a dangerous mission. The noisy and conspicuous drummer of an hour before had been transformed into a

silent, furtive figure, half lost in the shadowy course it followed.

III

AT eleven o'clock that night Murray—after an interview with Fency Conway, in which he had agreed to produce the diamonds for inspection and a possible five thousand dollars—returned to his room. He had just picked up the tan shoe when he heard footsteps in the hallway and a heavy pounding at his door.

Slipping the shoe back to its old position, he unlocked the door. As he opened it, he felt the muzzle of an automatic thrust against his vest.

"What was you doin' over at Conway's just now?" asked a voice. "The game's up. You've got that Martin jewelry—produce!"

The muzzle of the automatic gouged a little deeper.

"Search me," said Murray, throwing back the lapels of his coat. "If I've got 'em, why, they're yours—I'm generous at times."

He grinned as the search proceeded.

"Take off your shoes," finally commanded the detective.

Murray smilingly complied. From head to foot—no diamonds. The detective was mystified. His eyes roved around the room.

"Shoes ain't a bad bet, off or on," said he. "Chuck me that pair of tans there."

Murray's pulse leaped and his knees went weak. The room seemed to reel. He tried to speak, but he had suddenly grown dumb. Slowly picking up the tans, he

handed them over mechanically, and slumped into the nearest chair.

With dazed interest he saw the detective peer into the shoes, and watched him turn them upside down and shake them vigorously. Then his eyes widened in a stare of blank bewilderment. The necklace was not there!

Half an hour later, standing in the wreckage that the disappointed searcher had left in his wake, Murray gazed from time to time into an empty tan shoe which he fumbled foolishly.

The evening papers of the next day printed a brief item which, while old news to Kennedy, was full of information and enlightenment to Murray. It read as follows:

The diamond necklace thought to have been stolen early last week from the residence of Mrs. Norman Martin was found this morning half concealed behind a photograph upon her dresser, where it had evidently been misplaced.

That evening Murray sought out Kennedy. He discovered him belaboring an ancient bass drum with great zeal and fury—easily the noisiest unit of a little circle in which stood other zealous persons earnestly engaged in testing the construction, resonance, and durability of tambourines and battered instruments of brass.

"Oh, you Halleluiah Kid!" said Murray, as the din subsided. Then, moving nearer, he whispered: "About them diamonds—some class, Kid! But I ain't hol-lerin' none; you copped 'em from the old kick just in time. Say, where's this place you're washin' dishes at? I'm broke!"

APRIL AND MAY

SHE frowned and yet she laughed at me,
She lured me on with soft delight;
I followed, and she chaffed at me
And hid her face with hair like night.

And when I'd waited, torn by fears,
Repentance made her glances sweet;
She wept, and lo, her rainbow tears
Spread drops of crystal at my feet!

But when at last I held her close—
Elusive April brought to bay—
She blossomed like a lovely rose
Within my arms, and turned to May.

Amanda Benjamin Hall

Waterloo*

A Story of the Hundred Days
by the Baroness Orczy

Author of

"The Scarlet Pimpernel," "The Laughing Cavalier," etc.

A full length book novel, printed complete in this issue

CHAPTER I

THE LANDING AT JUAN



THE perfect calm of an early spring dawn lies over headland and sea. Hardly a ripple stirs the blue expanse of the bay. The softness of departing night lies upon the bosom of the Mediterranean like the dew upon the heart of a flower.

Veils of transparent grays and purples and mauves still conceal the distant horizon. Breathless calm rests upon the water, and that awed hush which at times descends upon nature when the finger of destiny marks an eventful hour.

But now the gray and the purple veils beyond the headland are lifted one by one. The mist of dawn rises upward like the smoke of incense from some giant censer swung by unseen hands.

The sky above is of a translucent green, studded with stars that blink and now are slowly extinguished one by one. The green

has turned to silver, and the silver to gold. The veils beyond the upland are flying in the wake of departing night.

To the south, where the golden sea blends and merges with the sky, a tiny black speck has just come into view. Larger and larger it grows as it draws nearer to the land. Now it seems like a bird with wings outspread—an eagle flying swiftly to the shores of France.

In the bay the fisherfolk, who are making ready for their day's work, pause a moment as they haul up their nets. With rough brown hands held above their eyes they look out upon that black speck—curious, interested, for the ship is not one they have seen in these waters before.

"'Tis the emperor come back from Elba!" says some one.

The men laugh and shrug their shoulders. That tale has been told so often in these parts, during the past year, that the good folk have ceased to believe in it. It has almost become a legend now. The story that the emperor was coming back—the man with the battered hat and the gray redingote—the people's

emperor, he who led them from victory to victory, whose eagles soared above every capital in Europe.

With stately majesty the dawn yields to day. The last golden tones have faded from the sky; it is once more of a translucent green, merging into sapphire overhead. The great orb in the east rises from out the trammels of the mist, and from awakening earth and sea comes the triumphant call of day. And far away upon the horizon to the south the black speck becomes more distinct and more clear; it takes shape, substance, life.

It divides and multiplies, for now there are three or four specks silhouetted against the sky—not three or four, but five, six, seven! Seven black specks detach themselves, one by one, from the vagueness beyond. Any one with an eye for seagoing craft can distinguish that topsail-schooner there, well ahead of the rest of the tiny fleet, skimming the water with swift grace. Immediately behind her comes a three-masted polacca—have we not seen her in these waters before? And then two graceful feluccas, whose lateen sails look like the outspread wings of birds.

But it is on the schooner that all eyes are riveted. She skips along so fast that soon her pennant is easily distinguishable—red and white, the flag of Elba, of that diminutive toy-kingdom which for the past twelve months has been ruled by the mightiest conqueror this modern world has ever known.

The flag of Elba! Then it is the emperor coming back!

The crowd had gathered on the headland—a crowd made up of barefooted fisherfolk, men, women, children, and of the laborers from the neighboring fields and vineyards. They have all come to greet the emperor—the man with the battered hat and the gray redingote, the curious, flashing eyes and mouth that always spoke genial words to the people of France.

Traitors turned against him—Ney, Mar-mont, Bernadotte, those on whom he had showered the full measure of his friendship, whom he had loaded with wealth and honors. Foreign armies joined in coalition against France and forced the people's emperor to leave his country, which he loved so well. They had sent him to humiliation and to exile; but he had come back, as all his people had always said that he would. He had come back—there was the topsail-schooner that was bringing him home so swiftly.

Now the schooner's name can be deciphered quite easily—"L'Inconstant"; and among

those who stand congregated on the headland there are some who swear that they can see the emperor standing on her deck. He wears a black bicorn hat, and his gray redingote; he is pacing up and down the deck of the schooner, his hands held behind his back in the manner so familiar to the people of France.

A mighty shout escapes the lusty throats of the men on the beach, sending its ringing echo from cliff to cliff, as the red and white pennant of the kingdom of Elba is hauled down from the ship's stern and the tricolor—the banner of liberty and of regenerate France—is hoisted in its stead. The soft breeze from the south unfurls the folds of the flag, and its red, white, and blue make a trenchant note of color against the tender hues of the sea, flaunting its triumphant message in the face of awakening nature.

The curtain has risen upon the first act of the most adventurous tragedy the world has ever known.

Napoleon Bonaparte has landed in the bay of Juan, with eleven hundred men and four guns, to reconquer France and the sovereignty of the world. Six hundred of his Old Guard, six score of his Polish light cavalry, three or four hundred Corsican chasseurs—thus did that sublime adventurer embark upon an expedition the most mad, the most daring, the most heroic, the most egotistical, the most tragic, and the most glorious that destiny has ever written in the book of this world.

CHAPTER II

GUESTS AT THE GRAND DAUPHIN

WHERE the broad highway between Grenoble and Gap parts company from the turbulent Drac, crosses the ravine of Vaux, and skirts the plateau of La Motte, with its magnificent panorama of forests and mountain peaks, a narrow bridle-path strikes off at a sharp angle on the left and curves upward through the woods to the hamlet of Vaux and the shrine of Notre-Dame.

Far away to the west the valley of the Drac lies encircled by the pine-covered slopes of the Lans range. Towering aloft, the snow-clad crest of Grande Moucherolle glistens like a sea of rose-colored diamonds under the kiss of the morning sun.

There was more than a hint of snow in the sharp, stinging air, even down in the valley; and the keen wind from the northeast whipped the faces of the two riders as they turned their horses up the bridle-path.

Though it was not long since the sun had first peeped out above the forests of Pelvoux, the riders looked as if they had already a long journey to their credit. Their steeds were covered with sweat and sprinkled with lather, and they themselves were plentifully bespattered with mud, for the road in the valley was soft after the thaw. Nevertheless, they sat their horses with the unconscious grace which marks the man accustomed to hard and constant riding, though—to the experienced eye—there would appear a marked difference in the style in which each horseman handled his mount.

One of them had the rigid precision of bearing which denotes military training. He was young and slight of build, with unruly dark hair fluttering from beneath his white sugar-loaf hat, and escaping the trammels of the neatly-tied black silk bow at the nape of the neck. He held himself very erect and rode his horse on the curb, the reins gathered tightly in one gloved hand, and that hand held closely and almost immovably against his chest.

The other sat more carelessly in his saddle; he gave his horse more freedom, with a chain-snaffle and reins hanging lightly between his fingers. He was obviously taller and probably older than his companion, broader of shoulder and fairer of skin. You might imagine him riding this same powerful mount across a sweep of open country, but his friend you would naturally picture to yourself in uniform on the parade-ground.

The riders soon left the valley of the Drac behind them. The path became rocky, winding its way beside a riotous little mountain stream. Higher up, peeping through the intervening trees, the whitewashed cottages of the tiny hamlet glimmered with dazzling clearness in the frosty atmosphere. Suddenly the younger of the two men drew rein, and, lifting his hat above his head, he gave an exultant call of joy.

"There is Notre-Dame de Vaux," he cried at the top of his voice, pointing to the distant hamlet. "There's the spot where I hope to hear glorious and authentic news. Oh!" he went on, speaking with extraordinary volubility, "it is all too good to be true! Since yesterday I have felt like a man in a dream. I haven't lived, I have scarcely breathed, I—"

The other man broke in upon his ravings with a good-humored growl.

"You have certainly behaved like an escaped lunatic since early this morning, my good De Marmont," he said. "Don't you think that

as we shall presently have to mix again with our fellow men, you might try to behave with some semblance of reasonableness?"

But De Marmont only laughed. He was so excited that his lips trembled, his hand shook, and his eyes glowed just as if some inward fire was burning deep down in his soul.

"No, I can't," he returned. "I want to shout and to sing and to cry '*Vive l'empereur!*' till those frowning mountains over there echo with my shouts. I'll have none of your English stiffness and reserve and curbing of enthusiasm to-day. Clyffurde, my dear friend," he added more soberly, "I am honestly sorry for you."

"Thank you," commented his companion. "May I ask how I have deserved this genuine sympathy?"

"Because you are an Englishman, and not a Frenchman," said the younger man earnestly. "Because you, as an Englishman, must desire Napoleon's downfall, his humiliation, perhaps his death, instead of exulting in his glory, trusting in his star, believing in him, following him. If I were not a Frenchman on a day like this, if my nationality or my patriotism demanded that I should fight against Napoleon, I firmly believe that I would turn my sword against myself in very shame."

It was the Englishman's turn to laugh, and he did it heartily. He had reined in his horse, presumably in order to listen to his friend's enthusiastic tirades; and there crept into his merry, pleasant eyes a quaint look of half-contemptuous tolerance tempered by kindly humor.

"Well, you see, my good De Marmont," he said, "you happen to be a Frenchman, a visionary and weaver of dreams. Believe me," he added more seriously, "if you had the misfortune to be a prosy, shopkeeping Englishman, you would certainly not commit suicide just because you could not wax enthusiastic over your favorite hero. You would realize soberly and calmly that while Napoleon Bonaparte is allowed to rule over France—or over any country, for the matter of that—there will never be peace in the world."

The younger man made no reply. A shadow seemed to gather over his face—a look almost of foreboding, as if the fate that already lay in wait for the great adventurer had touched the young enthusiast with a warning finger.

"Shall we go slowly on as far as the village?" Clyffurde resumed. "It is not yet ten o'clock. Emery cannot possibly be here before noon."

He put his horse to a walk, De Marmont keeping close behind him, and in silence the

two men rode up the incline toward Notre-Dame de Vaux. The tiny village lay in the peaceful hush of a Sunday morning. Only from the little chapel which holds the shrine of Notre-Dame came the sweet, insistent sound of the bell calling the dwellers of these mountain fastnesses to prayer.

Reaching the foremost houses, the riders drew rein in front of one of them, which bore upon its whitewashed wall the words "Auberge du Grand Dauphin," painted in bold, black characters. A young hostler in blue blouse and sabots came officiously forward, while mine host, in the same attire, appeared in the doorway. The two men dismounted, unstrapped their mantles from their saddle-bows, and loudly called for mulled wine.

It was not often that gentlemen of such distinguished appearance called at the Auberge du Grand Dauphin, seeing that Notre-Dame de Vaux lies on the outskirts of the forests of Pelvoux, that the bridle-path, having reached the village, leads nowhere save into the mountains, and that La Motte is close by with its medicinal springs and its fine hostels. But these two evidently meant to make a stay of it. They even spoke of a friend who would come and join them later, when they would expect a substantial *déjeuner* to be served with the best wine mine host could put before them.

Annette—mine host's dark-eyed daughter—was all aflutter at sight of the gallant strangers. Would a well-baked *omelette* and a bit of *fricandeau* suit the gentlemen? Well, then, that could easily be done. And in the meanwhile? Only good mulled wine? That would present no difficulty, either. Where would the gentlemen have it? Outside in the sunshine? It was very cold, and the wind biting, but the gentlemen had mantles, and Annette would see that the wine was piping hot. Five minutes, and everything would be ready.

What? The tall, fair-skinned gentleman wanted to wash? What a funny idea! Hadn't he washed this morning when he got up? Well, then, why should he want to wash again? But there, strangers had funny ways with them. She had guessed at once that *monsieur* was a stranger, he had such a fair skin and light-brown hair. Well, so long as *monsieur* wasn't English! For she detested the English.

Why did she detest the English? Because they made war against France. Well, against the emperor, anyhow. She firmly believed that if the English could get hold of the emperor they would kill him—yes, they would put him on an island peopled by cannibals, and let him be eaten, bones, marrow, and all.

Annette prattled on gaily and volubly, while she dragged a couple of chairs out into the open, placed them well in the shelter of a whitewashed wall, and brought a couple of pewter mugs, which she set on the table. She was very much interested in the tall gentleman, who had availed him of her suggestion to use the pump at the back of the house, since he was so bent on washing himself; and she asked many questions about him from his friend.

Ten minutes later the steaming wine was on the table in a huge china bowl, and the Englishman was ladling it out with a long-handled spoon, and filling the two mugs with the deliciously scented cordial. Both men were silent as they sipped their first mugful. It was obvious that each was busy with his own thoughts.

Then suddenly the young Frenchman put his mug down and leaned with both elbows upon the rough deal table, because he wanted to talk confidentially with his friend, and one never knew what prying ears might be about.

"I suppose," he said, "that when England hears the news, she will up and at him again, attacking him, snarling at him even before he has had time to settle down upon his reconquered throne."

"That throne is not reconquered yet, my friend," retorted the Englishman. "Nor has the news of this mad adventure reached England so far, but—"

"But when it does," broke in De Marmont, "your Castlereagh will rave and your Wellington will gather up his armies to try and crush the hero whom France loves and acclaims."

"Will France acclaim the hero? There's the question."

"The army will—the people will—"

Clyffurde shrugged his shoulders.

"The army, yes," he said slowly; "but the people—what people? The peasantry, perhaps; but what about the town folk—your mayors and *préfets*, your tradespeople, who have been ruined by the wars that your hero made to further his own ambition—"

"Don't say that, Clyffurde!" once more broke in De Marmont, more vehemently than before. "When you speak like that, I could almost forget our friendship."

"Whether I say it or not, my good De Marmont," rejoined Clyffurde with his good-humored smile, "within the next few months—or days, perhaps—you will bury our friendship beneath the ashes of your patriotism. No one, believe me," he added more earnestly, "has a greater admiration for the genius of

Napoleon than I have. His ambition for the greatness of France is superb; but underlying his love of country there is the love of self, the mad desire to conquer his enemies, to rule the world. It led him to Moscow and thence to Elba; it has brought him back to France. It will lead him once again to the Capitol, no doubt, but as surely, too, it will lead him to the Tarpeian Rock, whence he will be hurled down this time, not only bruised but shattered, a fallen hero, a broken idol."

"And England would like to be the one to give the hero the final push," said De Marmont, not without a sneer.

"The people of England, my friend, hate and fear Bonaparte as they have never hated and feared any one before in the whole course of their history. Tell me, have we not cause enough to hate him? For fifteen years has he not tried to conquer us, to break our power upon the sea, to throttle our commerce, to starve and ruin us? Believe me, we hate your hero less than he hates us. England has suffered enough from him in the past twenty years. She must have peace now, at any cost."

"Ah, I know!" sighed the other. "A nation of shopkeepers!"

"Yes, we are that, I suppose. We are shopkeepers, most of us."

"I didn't mean to use the word in any derogatory sense," protested Victor de Marmont. "Why, even you—"

"I don't see why you should say 'even you,'" broke in Clyffurde quietly. "I am a shopkeeper—nothing more. I buy goods and sell them again. I buy the gloves which our friend M. Dumoulin manufactures at Grenoble, and sell them to any London draper who chooses to buy them. A very mean and ungentlemanly occupation, is it not?"

He spoke French with perfect fluency, and with only the merest suspicion of a drawl in the intonation of the vowels, which suggested rather than proclaimed his nationality. Not the slightest tone of bitterness was apparent in his deep-toned and mellow voice. Once more his friend would have protested, but he put up a restraining hand.

"Oh," he said, "I don't imagine for a moment that you have the same prejudices as our mutual friend the Comte de Cambray, who must have made a very violent sacrifice to his feelings when he admitted me as a guest to his own table. I am sure he must often think that the servants' hall is the proper place for me!"

"The Comte de Cambray," retorted De Marmont with a sneer, "is full to his eyes with

the arrogant prejudices of his caste. It was men of his type, and not Marat or Robespierre, who made the Revolution, who goaded the people of France into becoming something worse than man-devouring beasts. And, mind you, twenty years of exile did not sober them, nor did contact with democratic thought in England and America teach them the most elementary lessons of common sense. If the emperor had not come back to-day, we should once more be working up for a revolution—more terrible this time, more bloody and vengeful, if possible, than the last."

Clyffurde made no comment on this peroration, and the younger man resumed more lightly:

"And, knowing the Comte de Cambray's prejudices as I do, imagine my surprise, after I had met you in his house as an honored guest, to learn that you—in fact—"

"That I was nothing more than a shopkeeper," broke in Clyffurde with a short laugh. "Nothing better than our mutual friend M. Dumoulin, glove-maker of Grenoble—a worthy man whom the Comte de Cambray esteems somewhat lower than his butler! It certainly must have surprised you."

"Well, you know, old De Cambray has a horror of anything that pertains to trade and an avowed contempt for everything that he calls '*bourgeois*.'"

"There's no doubt about that," assented Clyffurde.

"Perhaps he does not know of your connection with—"

"Gloves?"

"With business people in Grenoble."

"Oh, yes, he does!" replied the Englishman.

"Well, then?" queried De Marmont. "Perhaps I am indiscreet in speaking of it; but I never could understand it, and you English are so reserved—"

"That I never told you how the Comte de Cambray, Commander of the Order of the Holy Ghost, grand cross of the Order of the Lily, hereditary grand chamberlain of France, came to sit at the same table as a vendor and buyer of gloves," said Clyffurde. "There's no secret about it. I owe the exalted condescension of *monsieur le comte* to certain letters of recommendation which he could not very well disregard."

"Oh, as to that," said De Marmont, with a shrug of the shoulders, "people like the De Cambrays have their own codes of courtesy and of friendship."

"In this case, my good De Marmont, it was the code of ordinary gratitude that imposed

its dictum even upon the autocratic and aristocratic Comte de Cambray."

"Gratitude?" sneered De Marmont. "Gratitude in a De Cambray?"

"The Comte de Cambray," said Clyffurde with slow emphasis, "his mother, his sister, his brother-in-law, and two of their faithful servants were rescued from the very foot of the guillotine by a band of men known in those days as the League of the Scarlet Pimpernel."

"I knew that," said De Marmont.

"Then perhaps you also knew that their leader was Sir Percy Blakeney, a prince among gallant English gentlemen, and my dead father's friend. When my business affairs sent me to Grenoble, Sir Percy warmly recommended me to the man whose life he had saved. What could the Comte de Cambray do but receive me as a friend? You see, my credentials were exceptional."

"Of course," assented De Marmont. "Now I understand; but you will admit that I have had grounds for surprise. You who were the friend of Dumoulin, a tradesman and an avowed Bonapartist—two unpardonable crimes in the eyes of the Comte de Cambray—you to be seated at his table and to shake him by the hand! Why, man, if he knew that I have remained faithful to the emperor—"

De Marmont paused abruptly, and his lips were pressed tightly together, as if to suppress an insistent outburst of passion. Clyffurde frowned and turned away to hide a harsh look of contempt.

"Surely," he said, "you have never led the count to suppose that you are a royalist?"

"I have never led him to suppose anything. He has taken my political convictions for granted," rejoined De Marmont. A look of bitter resentment darkened his face, making it appear hard and lined and considerably older. "My uncle, Marshal de Marmont, Duc de Raguse, was an abominable traitor, as you know," he went on. "He betrayed his emperor, his benefactor and his friend. Paris could have held out easily for another four and twenty hours, and by that time the emperor would have arrived there, and saved his capital; but the marshal gave her over to the allies. It was an abominable act of cowardice; but that which is a source of irreparable shame to me is a virtue in the eyes of all these royalists. De Marmont's treachery against the emperor has placed all his kindred in the forefront of those who now lick the boots of that infamous Bourbon dynasty, and it did not suit the plans of the Bonapartist party that we—in the provinces—should proclaim our faith

too openly until such time as the emperor returned."

"And if the Comte de Cambray had known that you are an ardent Bonapartist—" suggested Clyffurde calmly.

"He would long before now have had me kicked out by his lackeys," said De Marmont, as he brought his clenched fist crashing down upon the table, while his dark eyes glowed with a fierce and passionate resentment. "For men like De Cambray there is only one caste—the noblesse; one religion—the Catholic; one creed—adherence to the Bourbons. All else is scum, trash, beneath contempt, hardly human! Oh, if you knew how I loathe these people!" he continued in a voice shaking with suppressed excitement. "I loathe them from the bottom of my soul!"

"And yet you and your kind are rapidly becoming at one with them," said Clyffurde, his quiet voice in strange contrast to the other man's violent agitation.

"No, we are not," protested De Marmont emphatically. "The men whom Napoleon created marshals and peers of France have been openly snubbed at the court of Louis XVIII. Ney, who is Prince of Moskowa and next to Napoleon himself the greatest soldier of France, has seen his wife treated little better than a chambermaid by the Duchesse d'Angoulême and the ladies of the old noblesse. My uncle is marshal of France and Duc de Raguse, and I am the heir to his millions, but the Comte de Cambray will always consider it a *mésalliance* for his daughter to marry me!"

There was silence for a while outside the little inn, silence which seemed full of portent, for through the pure mountain air there was wafted the hot breath of men's passions—fierce, dominating, challenging. Love, hatred, prejudice, and contempt—all were portrayed on De Marmont's mobile face; they glowed in his dark eyes and breathed through his quivering nostrils.

It was Clyffurde who presently broke the silence. His voice was quite steady when he spoke, though perhaps a trifle more toneless, more dead, than usual.

"And," he said, "what of Mlle. Crystal in all this?"

"Crystal?" queried the other curtly. "What about her?"

"She is an ardent royalist, more strong in her convictions and her enthusiasms than women usually are."

"And what of that?" rejoined De Marmont.

"I love Crystal."

"But when she learns that you—"

"She shall not learn it," declared the other cynically. "We sign our marriage contract to-night; the wedding is fixed for Tuesday. Until then I can hold my peace."

"But, man," Clyffurde exclaimed, "a deception such as you propose is cruel and monstrous! In view of what has occurred in the past few days, in view of what may happen if the news which we have heard is true—"

"In view of all that, my friend," retorted De Marmont. "The old régime has had its nine days of wonder and of splendor. The emperor has come back! We, who believe in him, who have remained true to him in his humiliation and in his misfortunes, may once more raise our heads and proclaim our loyalty. The Comte de Cambray will realize that all his hopes of regaining his fortune through the favor of the Bourbons have come to naught. Like most of the old noblesse who emigrated, he is without a sou. He may choose to look on me with contempt, but he will be glad enough to see the Cambray escutcheon regilt with Marmont gold."

"But Mlle. Crystal?" insisted Clyffurde, almost appealingly, for his whole soul had revolted at the cynicism of the other man.

"Crystal has listened to that ape Saint-Genis," replied De Marmont. "One of her own caste—a marquis with sixteen quarterings to his family escutcheon and not a sou in his pockets. She is very young, and very inexperienced. She has seen nothing of the world as yet. She was born and brought up in exile—in England, in the midst of that narrow society formed by impecunious *émigrés*—"

"And shopkeeping Englishmen," murmured Clyffurde under his breath.

"She could never marry Saint-Genis," reiterated Victor de Marmont. "The man hasn't a sou. Even Crystal realized from the first that nothing ever could have come of that boy and girl dallying. Her father never would have consented—"

"Perhaps not; but would she ever have consented to marry you, if she had known what your convictions are?"

"Crystal is only a child," said De Marmont. "She will learn to love me presently, when Saint-Genis has disappeared out of her little world, and she will accept my convictions as she has accepted me, submissive to my will as she was to that of her father."

Once more a protest rose to Clyffurde's lips, but he smothered it. What was the use of protesting? Could he hope to change the cynical nature of a man? And what right had he to interfere?

"And you are content to win a wife on such terms?" was all that he said.

"I have had to be content," was De Marmont's retort. "Crystal is the only woman I have ever cared for. Her sense of duty will make her love me in time, I doubt not."

Then as Clyffurde made no further comment, silence fell once more between the two men. For some time it remained unbroken save for the southing of the northeast wind as it whistled through the pines, while from the tiny chapel which held the shrine of Notre-Dame de Vaux came the sound of a soft-toned bell, ringing the midday angelus.

Just then, round that same curve in the road where the two riders had paused an hour ago in sight of the little hamlet, there appeared a man on horseback, riding at a brisk trot up the stony path. Victor de Marmont woke from his reverie.

"There's Emery!" he cried. He jumped to his feet, picked up his hat from the table where he had laid it down, tossed it up into the air as high as it would go, and shouted with all his might: "*Vive l'empereur!*"

CHAPTER III

THE GLORIOUS NEWS

THE man who now drew rein in front of the *auberge* looked hot, tired, and travel-stained. His face was covered with sweat, the lapel of his coat was torn, his breeches and boots were caked with half-frozen mud. Nevertheless, he swung himself out of the saddle with the brisk air of a boy who has enjoyed his first ride across country.

Surgeon-Captain Emery was a man well over forty, but his eyes glowed with the concentrated fire that burns in the heart at twenty. He shook De Marmont by the hand with a vigor which made the younger man wince with the pain of that iron grip.

"My friend, Mr. Clyffurde, an Englishman," said Victor de Marmont in response to a quick look of suspicious inquiry which flashed out from under Emery's bushy eyebrows. "You can talk quite freely, Emery; and for Heaven's sake tell us your news!"

Emery had been riding hard for the past three hours, his throat was parched, and through it his voice came up hoarse and raucous. Nevertheless, he at once began talking in short, jerky sentences.

"He landed on Wednesday," he said. "I parted from him on Friday, at Castellane. You had my message?"

"This morning early—we came at once."

"I thought we could talk better here; but I was spent last night—I had to sleep at Corps. So I sent to you—but first, in the name of mercy, give me something to drink!"

While he drank eagerly of the cold spiced wine which Clyffurde offered him, he still scrutinized the Englishman closely from under his bushy eyebrows. Clyffurde's winning glance, however, seemed to conquer his mistrust; for presently, after he had put his mug down again, he stretched out a cordial hand.

"Now that our emperor is back with us," he said, as if in apology for his former suspicions, "we, his friends, are bound to look askance at every Englishman we meet."

"Of course you are," said Clyffurde with his habitual good-humored smile, as he took Surgeon-Captain Emery's extended hand.

"It is the hand of a friend that I am grasping?" insisted Emery.

"Of a personal friend, if you will call him so," replied Clyffurde. "Politically, I hardly count, you see. I am just a looker-on at the game."

The surgeon-captain's keen eyes shot a rapid glance at the Englishman's tall, well-knit figure.

"You are not a fighting man?" he queried.

"No," replied Clyffurde. "I am only a tradesman."

"Your news, Emery, your news!" broke in Victor de Marmont, hardly able to keep his excitement in check.

Emery sat down close to the table and stretched his short, thick legs out before him.

"My news is of the best," he said. "We left Porto Ferraio on Sunday last, but only landed on Wednesday, as I told you, for we were becalmed in the Mediterranean. We came on shore near Antibes at midday, and bivouacked in an olive grove on the way to Cannes. That was a sight good for sore eyes, my friends, to see him sitting there by the camp-fire, his feet firmly planted upon the soil of France. What a man, sir, what a man!" he continued, turning to Clyffurde. "On board of L'Inconstant he composed and dictated his proclamation to the army, to the soldiers of France—the finest piece of prose, sir, I have ever read in all my life. But you shall judge of it, sir, you shall judge."

With hands shaking with excitement he fumbled in the bulging pocket of his coat, and extracted therefrom a roll of loose papers roughly tied together with a piece of tape.

"You shall read it, sir," he repeated while his trembling fingers vainly tried to undo the

knot in the tape. "And then mayhap you'll tell me if your Pitt was ever half so eloquent. Curse these knots!"

"Will you allow me, sir?" said Clyffurde quietly. With steady hand he undid the refractory knots and spread the papers out upon the table. The documents bore the name at sound of which Europe had trembled and crowns had felt insecure, the name which men had breathed—nay, still breathed—either with passionate loyalty or with bitter hatred—"Napoleon." They were copies of the message wherewith the heroic adventurer meant to reconquer the hearts of the soldiers whom he had once led to such glorious victories.

De Marmont read the long proclamation through from end to end in a half-audible voice. Now and again he gave a little cry of triumph at mention of the victories of Austerlitz and Jena, of Friedland and Wagram, at mention of those imperial eagles which had led the armies of France conquering and glorious throughout the length and breadth of Europe—or a cry of shame and horror at mention of the traitor whose name he bore, and who had delivered France into the hands of strangers and his emperor into the power of his enemies.

When the young enthusiast had read the proclamation through to the end, he raised the paper to his lips and fervently kissed the imprint of the revered name—Napoleon.

"Now tell me more about him," he said, resting both elbows on the table and fastening his eyes upon Surgeon-Captain Emery.

"Well," resumed the latter, "as I told you, we bivouacked among the olive-trees on the way to Cannes. The emperor had already sent Cambronne on ahead with forty of his grenadiers to commandeer what horses and mules he could, as we were not able to bring many across from Porto Ferraio.

"Cambronne," he said, "you shall be in command of the vanguard in this, the finest campaign I have ever undertaken. My orders are that you do not fire a single unnecessary shot. Remember that I mean to reconquer my imperial crown without shedding one drop of French blood."

"Oh, he is in excellent health and spirits! Younger, bolder than ever! I tell you, friends," continued the worthy surgeon-captain, bringing his hand flat down upon the table with an emphatic bang, "that it is going to be a triumphal march from end to end of France. The people are mad about him. At Rocavignon, just outside Cannes, where we bivouacked on Thursday, men, women, and children were flocking round to see him, bring-

ing him wine and flowers, and crying '*Vive l'empereur!*'"

"But the army, man, the army?" cried De Marmont. "The garrisons of Antibes and Cannes and Grasse—did they go over to him?"

"We hadn't encountered the army when I left him on Friday," replied Emery. "We didn't go into Antibes and we avoided Cannes. You must give him time. The people in the towns wouldn't at first believe that he had come back. General Masséna, who is in command at Marseilles, spread the news that a band of Corsican pirates had landed on the littoral and were marching inland, devastating villages as they marched. The peasants from the mountains were the first to believe that the emperor had really come, and they came down in hundreds to see him and to spread the news. By the time we reached Castellane, the mayor was ready to furnish him with five thousand rations of meat and bread, with horses, and with mules. Since then he has been at Digue and at Sisteron. Be sure that the garrisons of those places have rallied round his eagles by now."

"And so there has been no *contretemps*?" De Marmont asked.

"Nothing serious, so far. We had to abandon our guns at Grasse, for the emperor felt that they would impede the rapidity of his progress. Our second day's march was rather trying, too. The mountain passes were deep in snow; the lancers had to lead their horses along the edge of sheer precipices, and those who had no mounts had to carry their heavy saddles and bridles on the slippery paths. But he was walking, too, stick in hand, losing his footing now and then, just as they did, but always cheerful, always full of hope. At Antibes young Casabianca got himself arrested with twenty grenadiers—they had gone into the town to requisition a few provisions. When the news reached us, some of the younger men tried to persuade the emperor to march on the city and carry the place by force of arms before Casabianca's misfortune got bruited abroad.

"No!" he said. 'Every minute is precious. All we can do is to get along faster than the evil news can travel. If half my small army were captive at Antibes, I would still move on. If every man were a prisoner in the citadel, I would march on alone.'

"That's the man, my friends," concluded Emery, with ever-growing enthusiasm. "That's our emperor!"

And he cast a defiant look on Clyffurde, as much as to say:

"Bring on your Wellington and your armies now! The emperor has come back, and the whole of France will know how to guard him!" Then he turned to De Marmont.

"And now tell me about 'Grenoble,'" he said.

"Grenoble had an inkling of the news last night," replied De Marmont. "Marchand has been secretly assembling his troops, he has sent to Chambéry for the Seventh and Eleventh regiments of the line and to Vienne for the Fourth Hussars. Inside Grenoble he has the Fifth Infantry regiment, the Fourth Artillery, and the Third Engineers, with a train-squadron. This morning he is holding a council of war, and I know that he has been in constant communication with Masséna. The news is gradually filtering through into the town. People stand at the street-corners and whisper among themselves. The words '*l'empereur*' seemed wafted upon this morning's breeze."

"And by to-night we'll have the emperor's proclamation to his people pinned up on the walls of the Hôtel de Ville!" exclaimed Emery. With hands still trembling with excitement he gathered the precious papers together and slipped them back into his coat-pocket. "And now," he went on, "for one very important matter—which, by the way, was the chief reason for my asking you, my good De Marmont, to meet me here."

"Yes? What is it?" queried De Marmont.

Surgeon-Captain Emery leaned across the table and dropped his voice.

"The matter is one of money," he said slowly. "As you know, that scurvy government of the Restoration never gave the emperor one single sou of the yearly revenue which it solemnly agreed to pay him. Now, of course," he continued still more emphatically, "we know that the army will rally round him to a man; but the most loyal army in the world cannot subsist without money, and the emperor has little or none. The news of his triumphant march across France will reach Paris long before he does. His Most Excellent and Most Corpulent Majesty King Louis will have time to skip over to England, or to Ghent, with everything in the treasury on which he can lay his august hands. Now, De Marmont, do you perceive what the serious matter is which caused me to meet you here—twenty-five kilometers from Grenoble, where I ought to be at the present moment?"

"Yes, I see grave trouble there," said De Marmont with characteristic insouciance; "but I am rich, thank Heaven, and—"

"And may God bless you, my dear De Marmont, for the thought," broke in Emery

earnestly; "but what may be called a large private fortune is as nothing before the needs of an army. Soon, of course, the emperor will be in peaceful possession of his throne, and will have all the resources of France at his command, but before that happy time arrives there will be much fighting, and many days—weeks, perhaps—of anxiety to go through. During those weeks the army must be paid and fed, and your private fortune, my dear De Marmont, would—even if the emperor were to accept your sacrifice, which is not likely—be but as a drop in the ocean. What are two or even three millions, my dear friend? It is forty, fifty millions, that the emperor wants."

De Marmont this time had nothing to say. He was staring moodily and silently before him.

"Now, that is what I have come to talk to you about," continued Emery, once more throwing a half-suspicious glance on the impassive, though obviously interested face of the Englishman. "Always supposing that *monsieur* here is on our side."

"Neither on your side nor on the other, captain," said Bobby Clyffurde with a slight tone of impatience. "I am a mere tradesman, as I have had the honor to tell you—a spectator at this game of political conflict. M. de Marmont knows this well, else he had not asked me to accompany him to-day nor offered me a mount to enable me to do so. But if you prefer it," he added lightly, "I can go for a stroll, while you discuss these graver matters."

He would have risen from the table only that Emery immediately detained him.

"No offense, sir," said the surgeon-captain bluntly.

"None, I give you my word," assented the Englishman. "It is only natural that you should wish to discuss such grave matters in private. Let me go and see to our *déjeuner*."

This time Emery did not detain him as he rose and turned to go within, to look for mine host or Annette. Soon his cheerful voice was heard, echoing along the low rafters of the little inn, loudly calling for Annette and for news of the baked *omelette* and the *fricandeau*.

"You really could have talked quite freely before Mr. Clyffurde, my good Emery," said De Marmont, as soon as Bobby had disappeared inside the inn. "He really takes no part in politics. He is a friend alike of the Comte de Cambray and of Dumoulin the glove-maker. He has visited our Bonapartist Club. Dumoulin has vouched for him. You see, he is not a fighting man."

"I suppose you are equally sure that he is not an English spy," remarked Emery.

"Of course I am sure. Dumoulin has known him for years in business, though this is the first time that Clyffurde has visited Grenoble. He is in the glove trade in England; his interests are purely commercial. I first met him in Dumoulin's house. We took a liking to each other, and since then we have ridden a great deal together; but our political conversations have never been very serious. I asked him to come with me this morning, and he consented, for he dearly loves a horse. I assure you, you might have said anything before him."

"*Eh, bien*, I'm sorry if I've been obstinate and ungracious," said the surgeon-captain, but in a tone that obviously belied his words. "Frankly, though, I am very glad that we are alone for the moment."

With a wave of his thick, short-fingered hand he dismissed this less important subject-matter, and once more spoke with his wonted eagerness of that which lay nearest his heart.

"Now listen, my good De Marmont," he said. "Do you recollect last March, when the empress—poor, wretched, misguided woman—fled so precipitately from Paris, taking with her the crown diamonds and money and treasure belonging to the emperor?"

"Yes, I remember all that perfectly well," broke in De Marmont.

"Well, then, you know that that abominable Talleyrand sent one of his emissaries after the empress and her suite; that this emissary—Dudon was his name—reached Orléans just before Marie Louise herself got there—"

"And that he ordered the seizure of the empress's convoy as soon as it arrived in the city," broke in De Marmont again. "Yes, I recollect that abominable outrage perfectly. It makes my blood boil whenever I think of it—when I think of those fatuous, treacherous Bourbons gloating over the emperor's belongings, while the empress went her way as effectually despoiled as if she had been waylaid by so many brigands on a public highway!"

"Just so," resumed Emery. "But I don't know if you ever heard that when the stolen cases were opened at the Tuileries, there was just as much disappointment as gloating. Some of those fatuous Bourbons, as you so rightly call them, expected to find forty or fifty millions of the emperor's personal savings there—bank-notes and drafts on the banks of France, of England, and of Amsterdam, which they were looking forward to distributing among themselves and their friends. Your

friend the Comte de Cambray would no doubt have come in for his share in the distribution. But M. de Talleyrand is a very wise man! Always far-seeing, he knows the improvidence, the prodigality, the ostentation of these new masters whom he is so ready to serve. Ere Dudon reached Paris with his booty, M. de Talleyrand had very carefully eliminated therefrom some twenty-five million francs in bank-notes and bankers' drafts, which he felt would come in very usefully for some rainy day."

"But M. de Talleyrand is immensely rich himself," protested De Marmont.

"Ah, he did not take the twenty-five millions for his own benefit," said Emery. "I would not so boldly accuse him of theft. The money has been carefully put away by M. de Talleyrand for the use of His Corpulent Majesty Louis de Bourbon, eighteenth of that name."

Here Emery made a dramatic pause and looked triumphantly across at his companion. De Marmont seemed somewhat bewildered.

"But I don't understand—" he began.

"Why I am telling you this?" retorted Emery, still with that triumphant air. "You shall understand in a moment, my friend, when I tell you that those twenty-five millions were never taken north to Paris. They were conveyed in strict secrecy south to Grenoble."

"To Grenoble?" exclaimed De Marmont.

"To Grenoble," reasserted Emery.

"But why? Why such a long way? Why Grenoble?" queried the young man in obvious puzzlement.

"There may have been several reasons," replied Emery. "Both the *préfet* of the department and the military commandant are hot royalists, while the province of Dauphiné is against the Bourbons. In case of an army corps being sent down to quell possible revolt, the money would have been there to hand. Again, if you remember, there was talk at the time of the King of Naples proving troublesome; and in case of a campaign on the frontier the money lying ready to hand at Grenoble would prove very useful. But I cannot pretend to give you all the reasons which actuated M. de Talleyrand when he caused the stolen money to be conveyed secretly to Grenoble rather than to Paris. Enough that he did it, and that at this very moment there are twenty-five millions which are the rightful property of the emperor locked up in the cellars of the Hôtel de Ville at Grenoble."

"But," murmured De Marmont, who still seemed bewildered at all that he had heard, "are you sure?"

"Quite sure," affirmed Emery. "Dumoulin brought news of it to the emperor at Elba several months ago. The money is there," he reiterated. "Now the question is, how are we going to get hold of it?"

"Easily," rejoined De Marmont with his habitual enthusiasm. "When the emperor marches into Grenoble, and the whole of the garrison rallies around him, he can go straight to the Hôtel de Ville and take everything that he wants."

"Always supposing that *monsieur le préfet* does not anticipate the emperor's coming by conveying the money to Paris or elsewhere before we can get hold of it," said Emery.

"Fourier is not sufficiently astute for that."

"Perhaps not, but we must not neglect possibilities. That money would be a perfect god-send to the emperor. It is his, too. Anyhow, my good De Marmont, that is what I wanted to talk over quietly with you before going into Grenoble. Can you think of any means of getting hold of the money in case Fourier has the notion of sending it away?"

"I would like to think that over, Emery," said De Marmont thoughtfully. "I will think over all you have told me, and here beneath the blue dome of God's sky I swear that I will get the emperor the money that he wants, or lose my honor and my life in the attempt!"

"Amen to that!" rejoined Emery with a deep sigh of satisfaction. "You are a brave man, De Marmont; would to Heaven every Frenchman was like you! And now," he went on, with sudden transition to a lighter mood, "let Annette dish up the *fricandeau*. M. Clyffurde," he added, calling to the Englishman, who had just appeared in the doorway of the inn, "my grateful thanks to you—not only for your courtesy, but for expediting that delicious *déjeuner* which tickles my appetite so pleasantly. I pray you sit down without delay. I shall have to make an early start after the meal, as I must be inside Grenoble before dark."

Clyffurde, good-humored, genial, quiet as usual, quickly responded to the surgeon-captain's desire. He took his seat at the table and spoke of the weather and the sunshine, the Alps and the snows, the while Annette spread a cloth and laid plates and knives and forks before the distinguished gentlemen.

"We all want to make an early start, eh, my dear Clyffurde?" said De Marmont gaily. "We have serious business to transact this night with the Comte de Cambray, besides partaking of his gracious hospitality, eh?"

Emery laughed.

"Not I, forsooth," he said. "*Monsieur le comte* would as soon have Beelzebub inside his doors. And I marvel, my good De Marmont, that you have succeeded in keeping on such friendly terms with that royalist ogre."

"I?" said De Marmont, whose inward exultation radiated from his entire personality. "I, my dear Emery? Did you not know that I am that royalist ogre's future son-in-law? This is a glorious day for me as well as a glorious day for France. Emery, dear friend, wish me joy and happiness. On Tuesday I wed Mlle. Crystal de Cambray; to-night we sign our marriage contract. Wish me joy, I say! She's a bride well worth the winning. Napoleon sets forth to conquer a throne, I to conquer love. And you, old sober-face, do not look so glum!" he added, turning to Clyffurde.

And his ringing laugh seemed to echo from end to end of the narrow valley.

After which a lighter atmosphere hung around the table outside the Auberge du Grand Dauphin. There was but little talk of the political situation, still less of party hatred and caste prejudices. The hero's name was still on the lips of the two men who worshiped him, and Clyffurde, faithful to his attitude of detachment from political conflicts, listened unmoved to the impassioned dithyrambs of his friends.

So absorbed were these two in their conversation that they failed to notice that Clyffurde hardly touched the excellent *déjeuner* set before him, and left mine host's fine Burgundy almost untasted.

CHAPTER IV

THE OLD RÉGIME

On that same day, at about the hour when Victor de Marmont and his English friend first sighted Notre-Dame de Vaux, the big folding doors which led from the spacious reception-rooms of the Château of Brestalou to the small boudoir beyond, were thrown open, and Hector, the Comte de Cambray's old retainer, appeared to announce that *monsieur le comte* would be ready to receive *madame la duchesse* in the library in a quarter of an hour.

The Duchesse Douairière d'Agen thereupon closed the much bethumbed missal which she was reading—since this was Sunday, and she had been unable to attend mass owing to that severe twinge of rheumatism in her right knee—and placed it upon the table close to her elbow. Then, with delicate, bemittened hand, she smoothed out one unruly crease in her

puce silk gown, and finally looked up through her bone-rimmed spectacles at the sober-visaged, majestic personage who stood at attention in the doorway.

"Tell *monsieur le comte*, my good Hector," she said with slow deliberation, "that I will be with him at the time which he has so graciously appointed."

Hector bowed himself out of the room with that perfect decorum which proclaims the well-trained domestic of an aristocratic house. As soon as the tall mahogany doors were closed behind him, *madame la duchesse* took her spectacles off from her high-bred nose and gave a little sniff, which caused Mlle. Crystal to look up from her book and mutely to question her aunt with those wonderful blue eyes of hers.

"*Ah ça*, my little Crystal," was *madame's* tart response to that eloquent inquiry. "Does my brother imagine himself to be a second Bourbon king, throning it in the Tuileries and granting audiences to the ladies of his court? Or is it only for my edification that he plays this magnificent game of etiquette and ceremonial which has set me wondering since last night? *Monsieur le comte* will receive *madame la duchesse* in a quarter of an hour, forsooth!" she added, mimicking Hector's pompous manner. "I should think, indeed, that he would receive his own sister when and where it suited her convenience, not his!"

Crystal was silent for a moment or two; and in those same expressive eyes which she kept fixed on *madame's* face, the look of mute inquiry had become more insistent. It almost seemed as if she were trying to penetrate the underlying thoughts of the older woman, as if she tried to read all that there was in that kindly glance of hidden sarcasm, of humor or tolerance, or of gentle contempt.

There are some very old people living in Grenoble at the present day whose mothers or fathers have told them that they remembered Mlle. Crystal de Cambray quite well in the year when her father returned from England and once more took possession of his ancestral home on the bank of the Isère. Mlle. de Cambray was just nineteen in that eventful year of 1814; in February of the following year she attained her twentieth birthday.

Of course you know that she was born in England, and that her mother was English, for had not *monsieur le comte* been obliged to fly before the fury of the Terrorists, whose dreaded Committee of Public Safety had condemned him to the guillotine? He had contrived to escape death by what was nothing short of a

miracle, and for twenty years he had lived in exile.

"Father loves all this etiquette, *ma tante*," Mlle Crystal said finally. "It brings back memories of a very happy past. It is almost the only thing he has left now," she added with a little sigh. "You will try to be indulgent to him, aunt darling, won't you?"

"Indulgent?" retorted the old lady with a shrug of her shoulders. "Of course I'll be indulgent. It's no affair of mine, and he does as he pleases; but I should have thought that twenty years spent in England would have taught him common sense—twenty years' experience in earning a precarious livelihood as a teacher of languages in—"

"Hush, aunt, for pity's sake!" broke in Crystal.

"All right! I won't mention it again," said *madame la duchesse* good-humoredly. "I have been in this house only twenty-four hours, my dear child, but I have already learned my lesson. I know that the memory of the past twenty years must be entirely blotted out of our minds—out of the mind of every one of us—"

"Not of mine, aunt, altogether," murmured Crystal.

"No, my dear, not altogether," rejoined *madame la duchesse* as she placed one of her fine white hands on the fair head of her niece. "Your beautiful mother belongs to the unforgettable memories of those twenty years."

"And not only my beautiful mother, aunt dear. There are men living in England to-day whose names must remain forever engraved upon my father's heart, as well as on mine. If we should ever forget them, we should be the meanest and blackest of ingrates."

"Ah!" said *madame*. "I am glad that my brother remembers all that in the midst of his restored grandeur!"

"Have you been wronging him in your heart all this while, *ma tante*?" asked Crystal, with a slight tone of reproach in her voice. "You used not to be so cynical once upon a time."

"Cynical!" exclaimed the duchess. "Bless the child's heart! Of course I am cynical—at my age what can you expect? But there, don't distress yourself; I am not wronging your father—far from it. Only all this grandeur—the state dinner last night, his gracious manner—upset me a little. I am not used to it, my dear, you see. Twenty years in that tiny house in Worcester have altered my tastes, I see, more than they did your father's; and remember that during these last ten months, which he seems to have spent in reviving the

old grandeur of his ancestral home, I have lived with the Sisters of Mercy at Boulogne, praying amid very humble surroundings that the future may not become more unendurable than the past."

"But you are glad to be back at Brestalou again? And you will remain here with us—always?"

"Yes, dear," replied *madame* gently. "I am glad to be back in the old *château*—my dear old home, where I was very happy and very young once—oh, so long ago! And I will remain with your father when you leave him."

"It seems terribly soon now, *ma tante*," Crystal said wistfully.

"Yes, time has a knack of flying faster than we wish. Well, my dear, so long as this day brings you happiness, the old folk who stay at home have no right to grumble." Then, as Crystal made no reply, and held her head resolutely away, *madame* said more insistently: "You are happy, Crystal, are you not?"

"Of course I am happy, *ma tante*," replied Crystal quickly. "Why should you ask?"

But still she would not look straight into her aunt's eyes, and the tone of *madame's* voice sounded anything but satisfied.

"I ask, I suppose, because I want an answer—a satisfactory answer. Last night it seemed as if your ideas of your own happiness and those of your father on the same subject were somewhat at variance."

"Oh, no, *ma tante*," said Crystal. "Father and I are quite of one mind on that subject."

"But your heart is pulling a different way—is that it?"

As Crystal once more relapsed into silence, and two hot tears dropped on her aunt's wrinkled hands, the old woman added softly:

"Saint-Genis, who hasn't a sou, was out of the question, I suppose?"

Crystal shook her head in silence.

"And that young De Marmont is very rich?"

"He is his uncle's heir," murmured Crystal.

"And you, child, are marrying a kinsman of that abominable Duc de Raguse, in order to regild our family escutcheon?"

"My father wished it so very earnestly," rejoined Crystal, who was bravely swallowing her tears, "and I could not bear to run counter to his desire. The Duc de Raguse has promised father that when I am a De Marmont he will buy back the forfeited Cambray estates and restore them to us. Victor will take the name of Cambray, and— Oh!" she exclaimed passionately, "father has had such a hard life, so much sorrow, so many disappointments, and now this poverty is so horribly grinding—I

couldn't have the heart to disappoint him in this!"

"You are a good child, Crystal," said *madame* gently, "and no doubt Victor de Marmont will prove a good husband to you; but I wish he wasn't a Marmont—that's all."

This remark, delivered in the old lady's most uncompromising manner, brought forth a hot protest from Crystal:

"Why, aunt," she said, "the Duc de Raguse is as faithful a servant as the king could possibly wish to have! It was he who brought about the downfall of Bonaparte and the restoration of our dear King Louis."

"Tush, child, I know that," said *madame* with her habitual tartness of speech. "I know it just as well as history will know it presently, and methinks history will pass on the Duc de Raguse just about the same judgment as I passed on him in my heart last year. I hate that Bonaparte as much as any one, and our Bourbon kings are almost as much a part of my religion as is the hierarchy of saints, but a traitor like the Duc de Raguse I cannot stomach. What was he before Bonaparte made him a marshal of France and a duke?—an out-at-elbows ragamuffin in the ranks of the republican army! To Bonaparte he owed everything—title, money, prestige, even the military talents which gave him the power to turn on the hand that had fed him. Delivered Paris to the allies, indeed!" continued the duchess, with ever-increasing indignation and volubility. "He betrayed Bonaparte, then licked the boots of the Czar of Russia, of the Emperor of Austria, of King Louis, of all the deadly enemies of the man to whom he owed his very existence. Thank Heaven that even in his lifetime he has an inkling of what posterity will say of him! Has not the French language been enriched with a new word that henceforth and for all time will spell disloyalty? To-day, when we wish to describe a particularly loathsome type of treachery, do we not already speak of a *ragusade*?"

Crystal had listened in silence to her aunt's tirade. Now, when *madame* paused—presumably for want of breath—she said gently:

"That is all quite true, *ma tante*, but I am afraid that father would not altogether see eye to eye with you in this. After all, a pagan may become converted to Christianity without being called a traitor to his false gods. The Duc de Raguse may have learned to hate the idol whom he once worshiped and for this profession of faith we should honor him, I think."

"Yes," grunted *madame*, unconvinced, "but we need not marry into his family!"

"But in any case," retorted Crystal, "poor Victor cannot help what his uncle did."

"No, he cannot," assented the duchess decisively; "and he is very rich and he loves you, and as your husband he will own all the old Cambray estates, which his uncle of *ragusade* fame will buy up for him; and presently your son, my darling, will be Comte de Cambray, just as if that awful revolution and all that robbing and spoliation had never been. And, of course, everything will be for the best in the best possible world—if only," concluded the old lady with a sigh, "if only I thought that you would be happy!"

"Of course I shall be happy, *ma tante*. As you say, M. de Marmont is very kind and good, and I know that father will be happy when Brestalou and Cambray and all the old lands are once more united in his name. Then he will be able to do something really great and good for the king and for France; and I, too, perhaps—"

"You, my poor darling!" exclaimed *madame*. "What can you do, I should like to know?"

A curious, dreamy look came into the girl's eyes.

"I don't know, *ma tante*," she said slowly, "but somehow I have always felt that one day I might be called upon to do something for France. There are times when that feeling becomes so strong that all thoughts of myself and of my own happiness fade from my knowledge, and it seems as if my duty to France and to the king were more insistent than my duty to God."

"Poor France!" sighed *madame la duchesse*.

"Yes, that is just what I feel. Poor France! She has suffered so much more than we have, and she has regained so much less! Poor, poor France! Our country should be our pride, our glory, and she is weak and torn and beset by treachery. Oh, if only I could do something for France and for the king, I should count myself the happiest woman on God's earth!"

"*Hé*, my little Joan of Arc!" said the Duchess d'Agen. "Your eloquence, *ma mignonne*, has warmed up my old heart, too; but, please God, our dear old country will not have need of such heroism again."

"I am not so sure of that, *ma tante*."

"You are thinking of that ugly rumor which was current in Grenoble yesterday?"

"Yes!"

"If that Corsican brigand dares to set his foot again upon this land—" began the old lady vehemently.

"Let him come, *ma tante*!" broke in Crystal

exultantly. "We are ready for him. Let him come, and this time, when God has punished him again, it won't be to Elba that he will be sent to expiate his villainies!"

"Amen to that, my child," said *madame* fervently. "And now, my dear, don't let me forget the hour of my audience. Not one minute must I keep my august brother waiting. I can hear Hector's footsteps in the corridor, and I will not have him see me in a fluster."

Madame la duchesse threw a quick glance into the gilt-framed mirror close by. She smoothed a stray wisp of hair which had escaped from under her lace cap; she gave a tug to her fichu and a pat to her skirts. Then, as the folding doors were once more thrown open, and Hector—stiff, solemn, and pompous—appeared under the lintel, *madame* threw back her head in the grand manner pertaining to the old days at Versailles.

"Precede me, Hector," she said with consummate dignity, "to the count's audience-chamber."

And with hands folded before her, her aristocratic head very erect, her mouth and eyes composed to reposeful majesty, she sailed out through the mahogany doors in a style which no one who had never curtsied to Louis the Well-Beloved could possibly hope to imitate.

For a few minutes Crystal remained where she had been sitting, on a low stool beside the high-backed chair just vacated by the duchess. Then she rose to her feet, turned to the tall French window, opened it, and stepped out into the garden.

The grounds of the *château* of Brestalou had suffered from years of neglect. The shrubs grew rank and stalky; the paths were covered with weeds. There was a feeling of spring in the air; the bare branches of the trees seemed swollen with the rising sap, and upon the edge of the terrace balustrade a red-breasted robin cocked its mischievous little eye upon her.

At the bottom of the garden there was a fine row of ilex-trees, with here and there a stone seat, and in the center an old stone fountain, overshadowed by the hanging boughs of the huge, melancholy trees. Crystal was very fond of this avenue. She had never seen Brestalou until some ten months before, when her father came back into his own and took his daughter on a tour of inspection to show her the magnificence of her ancestral home.

She had loved at once the fine old *château* with its gray, lichen-covered walls, its fine portcullis and crenelated towers. She had wept over the torn tapestries, the broken furniture, the family portraits which a rough and

impious rabble had wilfully damaged. She had loved the wide sweep of the terrace walls, the views over the Isère and across the mountain range to the peaks of the Grande Chartreuse; but above all she had loved this somber row of ilex-trees, the broken fountain, the hush and peace which always lay over this secluded portion of the neglected garden.

"Crystal!"

At first she thought that it was the wind sighing through the trees, so softly had her name been spoken.

"Crystal!"

This time she could not be mistaken. Some one had called her name; some one was walking up the avenue behind her. She would not turn round, for she knew who it was that had called, and she would not allow surprise to resuscitate the outward signs of regret. She stood quite still while those hasty footsteps drew nearer, and she made a successful effort to keep back the tears which threatened to fill her eyes.

A minute later she felt herself gently drawn to the nearest stone seat. She sank down upon it, still trying very hard to remain calm and, above all, not to cry.

"Oh, why, why did you come, Maurice?" she said at last, when she felt that she could look with some semblance of composure on the half-sitting, half-kneeling figure of the young man beside her. Despite her obstinate resistance he had taken her hand in his and was covering it with kisses. "Why did you come?" she reiterated pleadingly. "You must know that it is no use—"

"I can't believe it! I won't believe it!" he protested passionately. "Crystal, if you really cared, you would not send me away from you."

"If I really cared?" she said. "Maurice, sometimes I think that if *you* really cared you would not make it so difficult for me. Can't you see that every time you come you make me more wretched, and my duty seem more hard? Sometimes I feel as if I could not bear it any longer—as if in the struggle my poor heart would suddenly break."

"And because your father is so heartless—" he began vehemently.

"My father is not heartless, Maurice," she broke in firmly. "You must see for yourself how impossible it was for him to give his consent to our marriage, even if he knew that my happiness was bounded by your love. If you had a sister who was all the world to you, would *you* consent to such a marriage?"

"With a penniless, out-at-elbows good-for-nothing, you mean?" he said with a kind of re-

sentful bitterness. "And just because my king is powerless or supine in giving me back what was filched from my father! Surely it is only a question of a few years—months, perhaps. The king must give us back what that abominable Revolution took from us, because we were loyal to him. My father owned rich lands in Burgundy; the king must give those back to me—he must, he shall, he will! If only you will be patient, Crystal; if only you will wait—"

The fiery blood of his race had rushed into the head of Maurice de Saint-Genis. He was talking almost at random, but for the moment he believed everything that he said. Tears of passion came to his eyes; he buried his head in the folds of Crystal's white gown, and heavy sobs shook his bent shoulders.

"I think, Maurice," she said presently, "that in your heart you do an injustice to all of us—to me, to father, to yourself, even to the king. The king cannot give you that which is not his. Your property, like ours, was confiscated by the revolutionary government, because your father and mine followed their king into exile. The lands were sold for the benefit of the nation; the nation, presumably, has spent the money, but the people who bought the lands in good faith cannot be dispossessed by our king without creating bitter ill-feeling against himself, as you well know, and once more endangering his throne. The king gave my father back this dear old castle because it happened to have proved unsalable and was still in the hands of the government. Our lands, like yours, can never be restored to us; that hard fact has been driven into poor father's head for the past ten months, and it has gone home at last. These gray walls, this neglected garden, a few sticks of broken furniture, a handful of money from an overgenerous king's treasury, are all that fate has rescued for him from out the ashes of the past. My father is every whit as penniless as you are yourself, Maurice, as penniless as ever he was in England when he gave French and drawing lessons to a lot of young ragamuffins in a middle-class school. But Victor de Marmont is rich, and his money will purchase back all the estates which have been in our family for hundreds of years. For my father's sake, for the sake of the name which I bear, I must give my hand to Victor de Marmont and pray to God that some semblance of peace, the sense of duty accomplished, will compensate me for the happiness to which I shall bid good-by to-day."

Maurice de Saint-Genis once more rose to

his feet. All his vehemence, his riotous outbreak of rebellion, seemed to have been smothered beneath a pall of dreary despair.

"Then it is your last word, Crystal?"

"You know that it must be, Maurice," she murmured in reply. "My marriage contract will be signed to-night, and on Tuesday I am to be married."

"Then this is the last time that I shall see you, Crystal," said Maurice.

"You are going away?" she asked.

"How can I stay here? I shall leave to-morrow, early."

"Where will you go?"

"To Paris—or abroad—or the devil, I don't know which," he replied moodily.

"Father will be sorry if you go," said Crystal.

"Your father has been passing kind to me. He gave me a home when I was homeless; but it is not fitting that I should trespass any longer upon his hospitality."

"Have you made any plans?"

"Not yet; but the king will give me a commission. There will be some fighting now—there was a rumor in Grenoble last night that Bonaparte had landed at Antibes and was marching on Paris."

"A false rumor as usual, I suppose," she said indifferently.

"Perhaps," he replied.

There was silence between them for a while after that, silence only broken by the twitter of birds wakening to the call of spring. The word of farewell remained unspoken: neither of them dared to say it, lest it might break the barrier of their resolve.

"Will you not go now, Maurice?" said Crystal at last. "We only make each other hopelessly wretched."

"Yes, I will go, Crystal," he replied, and this time he forced his voice to tones of gentleness, although his inward resentment still bubbled out with every word he spoke. "I wish I could have left your house now, at once; but your father would resent it, and he has been so kind. I wish I could go to-day," he reiterated. "I dread seeing Victor de Marmont in this house, where the laws of chivalry forbid my striking him in the face!"

"Maurice!" she exclaimed reproachfully.

"I'll not say it again. I have sufficient reason left in me, I think, to show these parvenus how we of the old régime bear every blow which fate chooses to deal to us. They have taken everything from us, these new men—our lives, our lands, our very means of subsistence, and now they have taken to filching

our sweethearts—curse them! But at least let us keep our dignity!"

Again she was silent. What was there to say that had not been said—save that unspoken word "good-by"?

"May I kiss you for the last time, Crystal?" he asked very softly.

"No, Maurice," she replied. "Never again."

"You are still free," he urged. "You are not plighted to De Marmont yet."

"No, not actually—not till to-night."

"Then mayn't I?"

"No, Maurice," she said decisively.

"Your hand, then?"

"If you like."

He knelt down close to her. She yielded her hand to him, and with his usual impulsiveness he covered it with kisses into which he tried to infuse the fervor of a last farewell. Then, without another word, he rose to his feet and walked away down the avenue. Crystal watched his retreating figure until the overhanging branches of the ilex-trees hid him from her view.

She made no attempt now to restrain her tears; they flowed down her cheeks and dropped upon her hands. With Maurice's figure disappearing down the dark avenue, with the echo of his footsteps dying away in the distance, the last chapter of her first book of romance seemed to be closing with relentless finality.

The afternoon sun was hidden behind a bank of gray clouds, the northeast wind came whistling through the trees; even the feeling of spring in the air had vanished. It was just a bleak winter's day now. Crystal felt herself shivering with cold. She drew her shawl more closely round her shoulders; then, with eyes still wet with tears, but head held erect, she rose to her feet and walked rapidly back to the house.

Meanwhile the Duchesse d'Agen had followed Hector along the corridor and down the finely-carved marble staircase. At a monumental door on the ground floor the man paused, his hand upon the massive ormolu handle, waiting for *madame la duchesse* to come up.

He felt a little uncomfortable at her approach, for here in the big, square hall the light was clear, and he could see *madame's* searching eyes looking him up and down and through and through. She even put up her lorgnon; and, though she was not very tall, she contrived to look Hector straight between the eyes.

"Is *monsieur le comte* in there?" she asked,

pointing with her lorgnon to the Comte de Cambray's door.

"In the small library beyond, *madame la duchesse*," replied Hector stiffly.

"And," she queried with sharp sarcasm, "is the antechamber very full of courtiers and ladies just now?"

A quick blush spread over Hector's impassive countenance, and as quickly vanished.

"*Monsieur le comte*" he said imperturbably, "is disengaged at the present moment. He seldom receives visitors at this hour."

On *madame's* mobile lips the sarcastic curl became more marked.

"And I suppose, my good Hector," she said, "that since *monsieur le comte* has only granted an audience to his sister to-day, you thought it was a good opportunity for putting yourself at your ease and wearing your patched and mended clothes, eh?"

Once more that sudden wave of color swept over Hector's solemn face. He was evidently at a loss how to take the remark—whether as a rebuke, or merely as one of those mild jokes of which every one knew that *madame* was inordinately fond. He could not hide from the old lady's keen eyes that very obvious patch on the right knee of his plush breeches.

"*Madame la duchesse* will forgive me, I hope," he stammered painfully.

But already *madame's* kind old face had shed its mask of raillery.

"Never mind, Hector," she said gently.

"You are a good fellow, and there's no occasion to tell me lies about the rich liveries which are put away somewhere, or about the numerous flunkies all of whom are having unaccountably long holidays just now. I know that the carpets are not all temporarily rolled up, or the best of the furniture at a repairer's in Grenoble. What's the use of pretending with me, old Hector? Those days at Worcester are not so distant yet, when all the family had to make a meal off a pound of sausages, or your wife Jeanne—God bless her—had to pawn her wedding-ring to buy the Comte de Cambray a second-hand overcoat!"

"*Madame la duchesse*, I humbly pray your grace—" entreated Hector.

"Eh, what, man?" said the duchess lightly.

"There is no one but these bare walls to hear me; and my words, you'll find, will clear the atmosphere round you. It was very stifling, my good Hector, when I arrived! Now," she added, "announce me to *monsieur le comte*, and then go down to Jeanne and tell her that I, for one, have no intention of forgetting Worcester, or the pawned ring, or the sausages,

and that the array of Grenoble louts dressed up for the occasion in moth-eaten liveries dragged up out of some old chests do not please me half as much around a dinner-table as did her dear old face when she used to bring us the *omelette* straight out of the kitchen!"

She dropped her lorgnon, and, folding her aristocratic hands upon her bosom, she once more assumed the grand manner pertaining to Versailles. Hector, having swallowed an uncomfortable lump in his throat, threw open the folding doors and announced in a stentorian voice:

"*Madame la Duchesse Douairière d'Agen!*"

The Comte de Cambray, at this time, was close to sixty years of age, and the hardships which he had endured had left their indelible impress upon his wrinkled, care-worn face. But no one—least of all a younger man—could possibly excel him in dignity of bearing and gracious condescension of manner. He wore his clothes after the old-time fashion, and clung to the powdered peruke which had been the mode at Versailles before these vulgar young republicans took to wearing their own hair in its natural color.

Now, as he advanced from the inner room to meet *madame la duchesse*, he seemed a perfect presentation, or rather resuscitation, of the courtly and vanished epoch of the Roi Soleil. He walked with measured step, and with a stereotyped smile upon his lips. Pausing just in front of *madame la duchesse*, he stooped and lightly touched with his lips the hand which she held out to him.

"Tell me, *monsieur mon frère*," said *madame*, in her rather loud tones, "do you expect me to make my best Versailles curtsy? For I warn you that once I get down, with my rheumatic knee, you might find it very difficult to get me up on my feet again!"

"Hush, Sophie," admonished the count. "You must try to subdue your voice a little. We are no longer in Worcester, remember."

But *madame* only shrugged her thin shoulders.

"Bah!" she said. "There's only good old Hector on the other side of the door, and you don't imagine you are really throwing dust in his eyes, do you? Good old Hector, with his threadbare livery and his ill-fed stomach—"

"Sophie!" exclaimed the count, who was really vexed this time. "I must insist—"

"All right, all right, my dear André! I won't say anything more. Take me to your audience-chamber, and I'll try to behave like a lady."

A smile that was distinctly mischievous still

hovered round *madame's* lips, but she forced her eyes to look grave. Holding out the tips of her fingers to her brother, she allowed him to lead her, in the correct manner, into the next room.

Here *monsieur le comte* invited her to sit in an upright chair placed at a convenient angle close to his bureau, while he himself sat upon a stately, throne-like armchair. One shapely knee was bent, the other slightly stretched forward, displaying the fine silk stocking and the set of his well-cut satin breeches.

The duchess kept her hands folded in front of her, and waited in silence for her brother to speak. He seemed at a loss how to begin, for her piercing gaze was making him feel uncomfortable; he could not help but detect in it the twinkle of good-humored sarcasm.

Madame, of course, would not help him out. She enjoyed his obvious embarrassment, which took him down somewhat from that high altitude of dignity wherein he delighted to soar.

"My dear Sophie," he began at last, speaking very deliberately, "before the step which Crystal is about to take to-day becomes absolutely irrevocable, I desired to talk the matter over with you, since it concerns the happiness of my only child."

"Isn't it a little late, my good André," remarked *madame*, "to talk over a question which has been decided a month ago? The contract is to be signed to-night. Our present conversation might have been held to some purpose soon after the New Year. It is distinctly useless to-day."

"I could not consult you before, Sophie," the count said coldly. "You chose to immure yourself in a convent, rather than come back to your old home, as we all did when our king was restored to his throne. The post has been disorganized, and Boulogne is a far cry from Brestalou, but I did write to you as soon as Victor de Marmont made his formal request for Crystal's hand. To this letter I had no reply, and I could not keep him waiting in indefinite uncertainty."

"Your letter did not reach me until a month after it was written, as I had the honor to tell you in my reply."

"And that same reply only reached me a fortnight ago," retorted the count. "I then sent a courier at great expense, and in great haste, immediately to you," he added with a tone of dignified reproach. "I could not do more."

"Or less," she assented tartly. "And here I am, my dear brother, and I am not blaming you for delays in the post. I merely remarked

that it was too late now to consult me upon a marriage which is to all intents and purposes an accomplished fact."

"That is so, of course; but it would be a personal satisfaction to me, my good Sophie, to hear your views upon the matter. You have brought Crystal up from babyhood; in a measure, you know her better than even I do, and therefore you are better able than I am to judge whether her marriage with M. de Marmont will be conducive to her happiness."

"As to that, my good André," quoth *madame*, "you must remember that when our father and mother decided that a marriage between me and the Duc d'Agen was desirable, my personal feelings were never consulted for a moment; and I suppose that, taking life as it is, I was never particularly unhappy as his wife."

"And what do you adduce from those reminiscences, my dear Sophie?"

"Crystal is a sweet girl and a devoted daughter. She will make the best, never fear, of the circumstances into which your blind worship of your own dignity and of your rank have placed her."

"My good Sophie," broke in the count, "you talk as if I was forcing my only child into a distasteful marriage!"

"No, I do not talk as if you were forcing Crystal into a distasteful marriage, but you know quite well that she only accepted Victor de Marmont because it was your wish. Frankly—since you have chosen to ask my opinion at the eleventh hour—I don't like the marriage, though I see nothing against the young man himself. If Crystal is not unhappy with him, I shall be content. If she is, I will make myself exceedingly disagreeable both to him and to you; and that being my last word, I have the honor to wish you a polite good day."

She swept her brother an imperceptibly ironical curtsy, and turned to go; but he detained her once again.

"One word more, Sophie," he said solemnly. "You will be amiable with Victor de Marmont this evening?"

"Of course I will," she replied tartly. "*Monsieur mon frère*, do you take me for a washerwoman?"

"I am entertaining the *préfet* for the *souper du contrat*," continued the count quietly, ignoring the old lady's irascibility, "and the general in command of the garrison. They are both converted Bonapartists, remember."

"H-m!" grunted *madame*. "Whom else are you going to entertain?"

"Mme. Fourier, wife of the *préfet*, Mlle.

Marchand, the general's daughter, and, of course, the D'Embruns and the Gênoises."

"Is that all?"

"Some half-dozen or so notabilities of Grenoble. We shall sit down twenty to supper, and afterward I hold a reception in honor of the coming marriage of Mlle. de Cambray de Brestalou with M. Victor de Marmont. One must do one's duty."

"And pander to one's love of playing at being a little king in a limited way! All right—I won't say anything more. I promise that I won't disgrace you. I'll put on a grand manner that will fill those worthy notabilities and their wives with awe and reverence. And now, I'd best go," she added, "ere my good resolutions break down before your pomposity. I suppose the louts from the village will be braced up in those moth-eaten liveries, and the bottles of thin Médoc, purchased surreptitiously at a local grocer's, will be duly smothered in the dust of ages. All right, all right—I'm going. For goodness' sake don't conduct me to the door, or I'll really disgrace you under Hector's uplifted nose! Oh, shades of cold beef and treacle pies of Worcester—and washing-day—do you remember? All right, *mon-sieur mon frère*! I am dumb as a carp at last!"

And with a final outburst of sarcastic laughter the old lady finally sailed across the room.

CHAPTER V

A WOMAN'S ADVICE

EVEN as the Duchesse d'Agen placed her aristocratic hand upon the handle of the door, it was opened from without with what might almost be called undue haste, and Hector appeared in the doorway. It was not the sober-faced, pompous, dignified Hector of the household of the Comte de Cambray, but a red-visaged, excited, fussy Hector who for the moment seemed to have forgotten where he was, as well as the etiquette which surrounded the august personality of his master.

He contrived to murmur a humble if somewhat hasty apology when he found himself confronted at the door by *madame la duchesse* herself, but he did not stand aside to let her pass. She had stepped back into the room at sight of him, for obviously something very much amiss must have occurred thus to ruffle Hector's ingrained dignity. Even the count was involuntarily dragged out of his aristocratic aloofness, and almost, though not quite, jumped up from his chair.

"What is it, Hector?" he exclaimed.

"*Monsieur le comte*," gasped Hector, "the Corsican—he has come back—he is marching on Grenoble. *Monsieur le préfet* is here!"

But already, with a wave of the hand, the count had swept the unwelcome news aside.

"What rubbish is this?" he said wrathfully. "You have been dreaming in broad daylight, Hector! This excitement is most unseemly. Show *madame la duchesse* to her apartments."

Hector, thus reproved, made a great effort to recover his pomposity, and actually took up the correct attitude which a well-trained servant assumes when he shows a great lady out of a room. But even then, despite the well-merited reproof, he took it upon himself to insist:

"*Monsieur le préfet* is here, *monsieur le comte*," he said, "and begs to be received at once."

"You may show him up when *madame la duchesse* has retired," said the count with quiet dignity.

"By your leave, my brother," said the duchess, "I'll wait and hear what *monsieur le préfet* has to say. The news, if news there be, is too interesting to be kept waiting for me."

Accustomed as she was to have her own way, the duchess sailed back into the room and once more sat down in the chair beside her brother's bureau, while Hector, with as much grandeur of mien as he could assume under the circumstances, was still waiting for orders.

The count would undoubtedly have preferred that his sister should leave the room. He did not approve of women taking part in political conversations, and his manner plainly showed that he would like to receive *monsieur le préfet* alone; but he made no objection, probably because he knew that words would be useless if *madame* had made up her mind to remain.

"Show *monsieur le préfet* in," he said curtly to Hector.

He took up his favorite position in his throne-shaped chair—one leg bent, the other stretched out, displaying to advantage the shapely calf and well-shod foot. M. Fourier, mathematician of renown and member of the Institut de France, was one of those converted Bonapartists to whom it was fitting to teach lessons of decorum and dignity.

When Hector showed M. Fourier in, the two men—the aristocrat of the old régime and the bureaucrat of the new—presented a marked and curious contrast. The Comte de Cambray was calm, unperturbed, and slightly supercilious, as he moved with pompous deliberation to greet his guest. Jacques Fourier, man of science

and *préfet* of the Isère department, was short of stature, scant of breath, flurried and flord.

Nevertheless, the official did his very best to approach *madame la duchesse* with a semblance of dignity, and to kiss her hand in something of the approved courtly manner. When he had finally sat down and mopped his streaming forehead, the count said with kindly condescension:

"You are perturbed, my good M. Fourier!"

"Alas, *monsieur le comte*," replied the worthy *préfet*, still somewhat out of breath, "how can I help being agitated—this awful news!"

"What news?" queried the count, with a lifting of the brows which was meant to convey complete detachment and indifference.

"What news?" exclaimed the *préfet*. "Haven't you heard?"

"No," replied the count; and the duchess also shook her head.

"Town gossip does not travel as far as the *château* of Brestalou," added the count gravely.

"Town gossip!" reiterated M. Fourier. "Town gossip, *monsieur le comte*! Heaven help us all! Bonaparte landed at Antibes five days ago. He was at Sisteron this morning, and unless the earth opens and swallows him up he will be on us by Tuesday!"

"Bah, you have had a nightmare, *monsieur le préfet*," rejoined the count. "We have had news of the landing of Bonaparte at least once a month this half-year past."

"But it is authentic news this time, *monsieur le comte*," retorted Fourier. "The *préfet* of the Var department, the Comte de Bouthillier, sent an express courier on Thursday last to the *préfet* of the Basses Alpes, M. Duval, who sent that courier straight on to me. The Corsican, it seems, landed with only about a thousand of his Old Guard, but since then the troops in every district that he has traversed have deserted in a body and rallied round his standard. Altogether, the news which the courier brought me this morning was of such alarming nature that I thought it my duty, *monsieur le comte*, to apprise you of it immediately."

"That," said the count condescendingly, "was exceedingly thoughtful and considerate, my good M. Fourier. And what is the alarming news?"

"First, that Bonaparte made something like a state entry into Digue yesterday. The city was beflagged and decorated. The national guard turned out and presented arms; drums were beating, the population acclaimed him with cries of '*Vive l'empereur*!' Duval, the

préfet, fled to a neighboring village, taking the public funds with him, while General Loverdo, with a mere handful of loyal troops, has retreated on Sisteron."

Though the Comte de Cambray had listened to M. Fourier's narrative with all his habitual grandeur of mien, it soon became obvious that some of his aristocratic sang-froid had abandoned him. His furrowed cheeks had become a shade paler than usual, and the slender hand which toyed with an ivory paper-knife on his desk had not its wonted steadiness.

"And in your department, *monsieur le préfet*, in Grenoble itself, is the garrison equally likely to go over to the Corsican brigand?" he inquired, a slight hoarseness in his voice.

M. Fourier shrugged his shoulders.

"General Marchand is doing all he can to insure effectual resistance, *monsieur le comte*; but we are in the hands of the army, and in the Dauphiné, alas, the army is only too ready to cry: '*Vive l'empereur!*'"

There was silence in the stately room, silence broken only by the tap-tap of the ivory paper-knife with which the count was nervously fidgeting. M. Fourier was wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

"For Heaven's sake, André, stop that irritating noise," said the duchess. "That tapping has got on my nerves."

"I beg your pardon, Sophie," said the count loftily.

He pulled himself together with a jerk. He straightened out his spare figure, put on that air of detachment which became him so well, and finally turned once more to the *préfet* a perfectly calm and unruffled countenance.

"And now, my good M. Fourier, since you have so admirably put the situation before me, will you also tell me in what way I may be of service to you in this—or to General Marchand?"

"I am coming to that, *monsieur le comte*," replied the *préfet*. "It will explain the reason of my disturbing you at this hour, when I was coming anyhow to partake of your gracious hospitality later on. But I want your assistance, as the matter of which I wish to speak with you concerns the king himself."

"Everything that you have told me hitherto, my good M. Fourier, concerns his majesty and the security of his throne. I cannot help wondering how much of this news has reached him by now."

"All of it, I should say. Already on Friday the Prince d'Essling sent a despatch to his majesty—by courier as far as Lyons, and thence by aerial telegraph to Paris. The king

—may God preserve him!" added the ex-Bonapartist fervently, "knows as much of the Corsican's movements at the present moment as we do; and I cannot guess what he will decide to do."

"Whatever happens," interjected the Comte de Cambray solemnly, "it is safe to say that Louis de Bourbon, eighteenth of his name, by the grace of God, will act like a king and a gentleman."

"Amen to that!" replied the *préfet*. "And now let me come to my point, *monsieur le comte*, and the chief object of my visit to you."

"I am at your service, my dear M. Fourier."

"You will remember, *monsieur le comte*, that when you were installed at Brestalou, and I was confirmed in my position as *préfet* of this department, I thought it my duty to tell you of the secret funds which are kept in the cellars of our Hôtel de Ville by order of M. de Talleyrand."

"Yes, of course, I remember that perfectly—French money which the unfortunate wife of the brigand Bonaparte was taking out of the country."

"Quite so," assented Fourier. "The funds are in a convenient and portable form, being chiefly notes and bankers' drafts to bearer; but the amount is considerable—twenty-five millions of francs."

"A comfortable sum!" interposed the duchess. "I did not know that Grenoble sheltered so vast a treasure."

"It was seized," said the count, "from Marie Louise when she was fleeing the country. Talleyrand did it all, and it was his idea to keep the money in this part of the country against likely emergencies."

"But the emergency has arisen," exclaimed M. Fourier excitedly, "and the money at Grenoble is useless to his majesty in Paris. Nay, it is worse than useless—it is in danger of spoliation. If the Corsican marches into Grenoble, if the garrison and the townspeople rally to him, he will occupy the Hôtel de Ville, and will seize the king's treasure, which lies now in one of its cellars."

"True!" mused the count. "I hadn't thought of that."

"Well," exclaimed the duchess, "seeing that the money was originally taken from his wife, the brigand will not be committing an altogether unlikely act, I imagine, by taking what was originally his."

"His, my good Sophie?" exclaimed the count, highly shocked. "Money robbed by that usurper from France, his?"

"We won't argue about it, André," said the

duchess. "Let us hear what *monsieur le préfet* proposes."

"Propose, *madame la duchesse!*" ejaculated the unfortunate *préfet*. "I have nothing to propose. I am at my wit's end what to do. I came to *monsieur le comte* for advice."

"And you were quite right, my dear M. Fourier," said the count. "Let us consider this question from every side, and then see to what conclusion we can arrive that will be for the best. First, of course, there is the possibility of your following the example of the *préfet* of the Basses Alpes, and taking yourself and the money to a convenient place outside Grenoble."

But at this suggestion M. Fourier was ready to burst into tears.

"Impossible, *monsieur le comte!*" he cried. "Where could I go? The existence of the money is known—known to the Bonapartists, I am convinced. There's Dumoulin, the glove-maker—he knows everything that goes on in Grenoble; and his friend Emery, who is an army surgeon in the pay of Bonaparte—both these men have been to Elba within the past few months. Then there's the Bonapartist club in Grenoble, with a membership of more than two thousand. The members have friends and spies everywhere, even inside the Hôtel de Ville. Why, the other day I had to dismiss a servant who—"

"Easy, easy, *monsieur le préfet,*" broke in the count impatiently. "The long and the short of it is that you would not feel safe with the money anywhere outside Grenoble."

"Or inside it, *monsieur le comte!*"

"Very well, then, the money must be deposited there where it will be safe. Now what do you think of Dupont's Bank?"

"Oh, *monsieur le comte!* He is an avowed Bonapartist! M. de Talleyrand would not trust him with the money last year."

"That is so, but—"

"It seems to me," interposed the duchess, "that by far the best plan, since this district seems to be a hotbed of disloyalty, would be to convey the money straightway to Paris. Then the king or M. de Talleyrand can dispose of it as best they like."

"Ah, *madame la duchesse!*" sighed M. Fourier ecstatically, as he clasped his hands together and looked at her with eyes full of admiration for her wisdom. "How cleverly that was spoken! If only I could be relieved from that awful responsibility—five and twenty millions under my charge and that Corsican ogre at our gates!"

"That is all very well," said the count, "but

how is it going to be done? 'Convey the money to Paris' is easily said; but who is going to do it? *Monsieur le préfet* here says that the Bonapartists have spies everywhere round Grenoble, and—"

"Ah, *monsieur le comte!*" exclaimed the *préfet* eagerly. "I have thought of such a beautiful plan! If only you would consent—"

The count's thin lips curled in a sarcastic smile.

"Oh, you have thought it all out already, *monsieur le préfet?*" he said. "Well, let me hear your plan; but I warn you that I will not have the money brought here. I don't half trust the peasantry of the neighborhood, and I won't have a fight in my house."

"No, no, *monsieur le comte,*" said M. Fourier. "I wouldn't suggest such a thing for the world. If the Corsican brigand is successful in capturing Grenoble, no place would be sacred to him. My idea was if you, *monsieur le comte*, who have so often journeyed to Paris and back, would do it now, before Bonaparte gets any nearer to Grenoble, and take the money with you—"

"I?" exclaimed the count. "It seems that your splendid plan merely consists in transferring responsibility from your shoulders to mine. Moreover, I don't know that you have the right to dispose of this money, which was entrusted to you by M. de Talleyrand in the king's behalf, without consulting his majesty's wishes in the matter."

"Bah, André!" broke in the duchess in her incisive way. "You are talking nonsense, and you know it. There is no time for ceremony now with that ogre at our gates. How are you going to consult his majesty's wishes between now and Tuesday, I should like to know?"

"Perhaps," said the count, waxing politely sarcastic, "you would prefer us to consult yours?"

"You might do worse," she retorted imperturbably. "The question is easily solved. Ought his majesty the king to have that money, or should *monsieur le préfet* take the risk of its falling into Bonaparte's hands? Answer me that," she said decisively, "and then I will tell you how best to succeed in carrying out your own wishes."

"What a question, my good Sophie!" said the count stiffly. "Of course, we desire his majesty to have what is rightfully his."

"You mean that he ought to have the twenty-five millions which M. de Talleyrand stole from Marie Louise. Very well, then, obviously that money ought to be taken to Paris before Bonaparte gets much nearer to Grenoble; but it

should not be taken by you, my good André, nor yet by *monsieur le préfet*."

"By whom, then?" queried the count.

"By me," replied the duchess.

"By you, Sophie! Impossible!"

"And why impossible, I pray you?" she retorted. "The money, I understand, is in a very portable form—notes and bankers' drafts which can be stowed away quite easily. Why shouldn't I be journeying back to Paris after Crystal's wedding? Who would suspect me of carrying twenty-five millions under my petticoats? All I should want would be a couple of sturdy fellows on the box, to protect me against footpads. Impossible?" she continued tartly. "Men are always so ready with that word. Get a sensible woman, I say, and she will solve your difficulties before you have finished exclaiming 'Impossible!'"

She looked triumphantly from one man to the other. There was obvious relief on M. Fourier's ruddy face, and even the count was visibly taken with the idea.

"Well," he at last condescended to say, "it does sound feasible, after all."

"Feasible? Of course it's feasible," said the duchess with a shrug of contempt. "If I am stopped on the way, and the money taken from me, well, I am stopped, that's all; and *monsieur le préfet*, or the Comte de Cambray, or any male agent they may have sent, would have been stopped likewise. But I maintain that a woman traveling alone is far more likely to succeed than a man. So don't let's argue any more about it. Crystal is to be married on Tuesday, and I will start that same afternoon. Can you bring the money over with you to-night?"

She put her query directly to the *préfet*, who was obviously overjoyed at the suggestion.

In the archives of the Ministry of War, in Paris, any one who looks may read that in the subsequent trial of General Marchand for high treason—after the Hundred Days and Napoleon's second abdication—*Préfet* Fourier, during the course of his evidence, gave a detailed account of his interview with the Comte de Cambray and the Duchesse d'Agen on Sunday, March 5, 1815. In his deposition he naturally laid great stress upon his own zeal in the matter, declaring that he it was who finally overcame by his eloquence the count's objections to the scheme and decided him to give his acquiescence thereto.

Certain it is that there was but little further argument between the duchess and the two men.

"I shall have the honor presently," said

Fourier, "of coming back here to respond to *monsieur le comte's* gracious invitation to dinner. Why shouldn't I bring the money with me then?"

"Indeed you must bring the money then," agreed the old lady, "and let there be no shirking or delay. Promptitude is our great chance of success. I ought not to start later than Tuesday, and I could do so soon after the wedding ceremony. I could then sleep at Lyons that night, at Dijon the next day, be in Paris by Thursday evening, and in the king's presence on Friday."

"Provided you are not delayed," sighed the count.

"If I am delayed, my good André, then anyhow the game is up. But we are not going to anticipate misfortune, and we are going to believe in our lucky star. So let us allow *monsieur le préfet* to return quietly to the Hôtel de Ville, so that he and Mme. Fourier may proceed to dress for to-night's ceremony, just as if nothing untoward had happened. In the meanwhile I will complete my preparations for Tuesday. And now, gentlemen," she added, rising from her chair, "I have the honor to wish you both a very good afternoon."

She did not wait long enough to allow the count time to ring for Hector, and she appeared so busy with her lace shawl that she was unable to do more than acknowledge M. Fourier's respectful salute with a slight inclination of the head. A fervent royalist herself, she had a wholesome contempt for these opportunists. She did not care to place her aristocratic fingers in the hand of a renegade who, she felt, might turn renegade again if his personal interest so dictated it.

Perhaps something of what lay behind her curt nod struck M. Fourier's sensibilities, for the high color fled from his round face, and he did not attempt to approach her for the ceremonial hand-kissing. He ran across the room as fast as his short legs would carry him, opened the door for her, and bowed to her as she sailed past him with all the deference which in the days of the Empire he had accorded to the Empress Marie Louise.

"It is a mad scheme, my good M. Fourier," sighed the count, when he found himself once more alone with the *préfet*. "But such as it is, I can think of nothing better."

"*Monsieur le comte*," exclaimed the *préfet* with delight, "no one could think of anything better. Ah, the women of France!" he added ecstatically. "How often have they saved France in moments of crisis! France owes her grandeur to her women, *monsieur le comte*!"

"And also her reverses, my dear M. Fourier," remarked the count.

CHAPTER VI

AN EVENTFUL EVENING AT BRESTALOU

WHEN Clyffurde came back to Brestalou after his long day's ride, he found the stately rooms of the old castle already prepared for the arrival of guests. There was an array of liveried servants in the hall and along the corridor through which he had to pass on the way to his own room. Their liveries of purple with canary facings—the heraldic colors of the family of Cambray de Brestalou—hardly showed, in the flickering light of wax candles, the many ravages of moth and mildew which twenty years of neglect had wrought upon the once fine and brilliant cloth.

Down-stairs the formal supper which was to precede the reception was laid for twenty guests. The table was resplendent with some of the silver so kindly lent by a benevolent king to those of his friends who had not the means of replacing the family treasures filched from them by the revolutionary government.

There were no flowers upon the table, and few candles burned in the ormolu and crystal chandelier overhead. Flowers and candles were luxuries which must be paid for with ready money—a commodity which was exceedingly scarce in the *grandiose château* of Brestalou; but they also were a luxury which could easily be dispensed with. Did not the Comte de Cambray set the fashions for the department of the Isère? If he chose to have no flowers upon his supper-table, and but few candles in his silver sconces, why, society must take it for granted that such now was *bon ton* and the prevailing fashion at the Tuileries.

Knowing his host's fastidious tastes in such matters, Clyffurde had made a very careful toilet, all the while that his thoughts were busy with the wonderful news which Emery had brought, and which was all over Grenoble by now. He and his two companions had left Notre-Dame de Vaux soon after their *déjeuner*, and together had entered the city at five o'clock in the afternoon. On their way they had encountered the traveling-coach of General Mouton-Duvernety, who was on his way to Gap, where he intended to organize strong resistance against Bonaparte. He had parleyed some time with Emery, whom he knew by sight, and suspected of being an emissary of the Corsican.

The surgeon-captain gave the worthy general a highly-colored account of the triumphal

progress of Napoleon, whom he boldly called "the emperor." Mouton—in no way belying his name—was very much upset not only by the news, but by his own helplessness with regard to Emery. He knew that the latter would presently be in Grenoble, distributing the usurper's proclamations all over the city; and having only one aide-de-camp with him, and a couple of loutish servants on the box of his coach, the general could do nothing to detain him.

As soon as the three men had ridden away, however, Mouton sent his aide-de-camp back to Grenoble by a roundabout way, ordering him to make as great speed as possible. His instructions were to see General Marchand as soon as may be, so that immediate measures might be taken to prevent the suspected emissary, if not from entering the city, at least from posting up proclamations.

But Mouton's aide-de-camp was no match against the enthusiasm and ingenuity of Emery and De Marmont. When he entered Grenoble soon after five o'clock, he was confronted by the printed proclamations signed by the dreaded name "Napoleon" and affixed to the gates of the city, to the Hôtel de Ville, the prison, and the barracks, and posted at almost every street-corner in Grenoble.

The three friends had parted at the Porte de Bonne. Emery went to his friend Dumoulin, the glove-maker; De Marmont made for his lodgings in the Rue Montorge, while Clyffurde rode straight back to Brestalou.

A couple of hours later, Victor de Marmont had also arrived at the castle. He, too, had made an elaborate toilet, and then had driven over in a hackney-coach, in advance of the other guests, seeing that he desired to have a final interview with the count before setting his name to his *contrat de mariage* with Mlle. de Cambray. An air of solemnity sat well upon his good-looking face, but it was obvious that he was trying, not with entire success, to keep an inward excitement in check.

The Comte de Cambray, believing that this excitement was entirely due to the solemnity of the occasion, had smiled indulgently—a trifle contemptuously, too—at De Marmont's very apparent eagerness. A vulgar display of feeling, an inability to control one's words and movements when under the stress of emotion, was characteristic of the parvenus of to-day. De Marmont's unfettered agitation when coming to sign his own marriage contract was only on a par with Préfet Fourier's nervousness this afternoon.

The count received his future son-in-law

with a gracious smile. The thought of an alliance between Mlle. de Cambray de Bres-talou and a De Marmont of nowhere had been a bitter pill to swallow, but he was too proud to show how distasteful it had been. Chatting pleasantly, the two men repaired together to the library.

Presently Clyffurde came down to the reception-room. He was immaculately dressed in fine cloth coat and satin breeches, with Mech-lin lace at throat and wrist, and his light-brown hair tied at the nape of the neck with a big black bow.

The stately apartment was silent and deserted, but it looked more cozy and homelike than usual. A cheerful fire was burning on the hearth, and the soft light of the candles fixed in sconces round the walls tempered to a certain degree that bare and severe look of past grandeur which usually hung upon every corner of the old *château*.

Clyffurde went up to the tall fireplace. He rested his hand on the ledge of the mantel, and, leaning his forehead against it, stared moodily into the fire.

Thoughts of all that he had learned in the past few hours, of the new chapter in the book of the destinies of France, begun a few days ago in the bay of Juan, crowded in upon his mind. What difference would the unfolding of that new chapter make to the destinies of the Comte de Cambray and of Crystal?

What had fate in store for the delicate girl whose future had been so arbitrarily settled by two men—one the buyer, the other the seller of her exquisite person, the shrine of her pure and idealistic soul? Even now, father and lover were sitting together discussing the purchase price. "You give me back my lands, I will give you my daughter!" Blood money, soul money, Clyffurde called it, as he ground his teeth together in impotent rage.

What folly it was to care! What folly to have allowed the tendrils of his oversensitive heart to twine themselves round this beautiful girl, who was as far removed from his destiny as were the ambitions of his boyhood, the hopes, the dreams which the hard circumstances of fate had forced him to bury beneath the grave-mound of rigid and unswerving duty!

But what a dream it had been, this love for Crystal de Cambray! It had filled his entire soul from the moment when first he saw her—down in the garden under an avenue of ilex-trees which cast their mysterious shadows over her. Her father had called to her, and she had come across to where Clyffurde stood silently watching this approaching vision of loveliness

which never would vanish from his mental gaze again.

Even at that supreme moment, when her blue eyes, her sweet smile, the exquisite grace of her, took possession of his soul—even then he knew that his dream could have but one awakening. She was already pledged to another, a happier man. Even if she were free, Crystal de Cambray would never have bestowed a thought upon the stranger—the commonplace tradesman, whose only merit in her sight lay in his friendship with another gallant English gentleman.

And knowing this—when he saw her after that, day after day, hour after hour—Clyffurde grew reconciled to the knowledge that the gates of his paradise would forever be locked against him. He grew contented just to peep through those gates; and the angel who stood on guard there, holding the flaming sword of caste prejudice against him, would relent at times, and allow him to linger on the threshold and to gaze into a semblance of happiness.

Those thoughts, those dreams, those longings, he had been able to endure; to-day reality had suddenly become more insistent and more stern. The angel's flaming sword would sear his soul if he lingered any longer by the enchanted gates. The semblance of happiness had yielded at last to dull regret.

He sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

The sound of the opening and shutting of a door, the soft frou-frou of a woman's skirt, roused him from his gloomy reverie and caused him to jump to his feet.

Mlle. Crystal was coming across the long reception-room, walking with a slow and weary step toward the hearth. Evidently she was not aware of Clyffurde's presence. He had full leisure to watch her as she approached, to note the pallor of her cheeks and lips, and that pathetic look of childlike self-pity, and almost of appeal, which veiled the brilliance of her deep-blue eyes.

A moment later she saw him. She came more quickly across the room, with hand extended, and an air of gracious condescension in her whole attitude.

"Ah, Mr. Clyffurde," she said in perfect English, "I did not know you were here, and all alone. My father is occupied with serious matters down-stairs, else he would have been here to receive you."

"I know, *mademoiselle*," he said, after he had kissed the tips of three cold little fingers which had been held out to him. "My friend

De Marmont is with him just now; he desired to speak with *monsieur le comte* in private, on a matter which closely concerns his happiness."

"Ah, then, you knew?" she asked.

"Yes, *mademoiselle*, I knew," he replied.

She had settled herself down in a high-backed chair close to the hearth. The ruddy light of the wood fire played upon her white satin gown, upon her bare arms and the ends of her lace scarf, upon her satin shoes and the bunch of snowdrops at her breast; but her face was in shadow, and she did not look up at Clyffurde. He—poor fool—stood before her, absorbed in the contemplation of this dainty picture, which after to-night might never gladden his eyes again.

"You are a great friend of M. de Marmont?" she asked.

"Oh, *mademoiselle*—a friend?" he replied.

"Friendship is too great a name to give to our chance acquaintanceship. I first met Victor de Marmont less than a fortnight ago, in Grenoble—"

"Ah, yes, I had forgotten. He told me that he had first met you at the house of a M. Dumoulin—"

"In the shop of M. Dumoulin, *mademoiselle*," broke in Clyffurde with his good-humored smile. "M. Dumoulin, the glove-maker, with whom I was transacting business at the moment when M. de Marmont walked in, in order to buy himself a pair of gloves."

"Of course," she said coldly. "I had forgotten."

She smothered a little yawn which may have been due to ennui, or to the tingling of her nerves. Clyffurde saw that her hands were never still for a moment; she was either fingering the snowdrops in her belt or smoothing out the creases in her lace scarf. From time to time she raised her head, and a tense expression came into her face, as if she were trying to listen to what was going on elsewhere in the house—down-stairs, perhaps, in the library, where she was being finally bargained for and sold.

Clyffurde felt an intense pity for her, and because of that pity—the gentle kinsman of fierce love—he found it in his heart to forgive her all her prejudices, that almost arrogant pride of caste which was in her blood, for which she was no more responsible than she was for the color of her hair or the vivid blue of her eyes.

She seemed so forlorn, such a child, in the midst of all this decadent grandeur. She was being so ruthlessly sacrificed for ideals that were no longer tenable, that had ceased to be tenable twenty-five years ago, when this

château and these lands were overrun by a savage and vengeful mob who were loudly demanding the right to live in happiness, in comfort, and in freedom. That right had been denied to them through the past centuries by those who were of her own kith and kin, and it was snatched with brutal force, with lust of hate and thirst for reprisals by the revolutionary crowd when it came into its own at last.

Something of the pity that he felt for this beautiful and innocent victim of rancor, oppression, and prejudice, must have been manifest in Clyffurde's earnest eyes; for when Crystal looked up at him, and met his glance, she drew herself up with an air of haughty detachment. She wished to convey still more tangibly to him the idea of that barrier of caste which must forever divide her from him.

Obviously his look of pity had angered her, for now she said abruptly and with still more marked coldness:

"My father tells me, sir, that you are thinking of leaving France shortly."

"Indeed, *mademoiselle*," he replied, "I have trespassed too long as it is on the gracious hospitality of *monsieur le comte*. My visit originally was only for a fortnight. I thought of leaving for England to-morrow."

A little lift of the eyebrows, an unnecessary smoothing of an invisible crease in her gown, and Crystal asked lightly:

"Before the—my wedding, sir?"

"Before your wedding, *mademoiselle*."

"I trust," she rejoined pointedly, "that you are satisfied with your trade in Grenoble."

The little shaft was meant to sting; but if Clyffurde felt any pain, he seemed to bear it with perfect good-humor.

"I am quite satisfied, I thank you, *mademoiselle*."

"Given the right temperament for such a career, it must be so much more comfortable to spend one's life in making money—buying and selling things, and so on—rather than to risk it every day for the barren honor of serving one's king and country."

Her voice had suddenly become trenchant and hard, her manner contemptuous—at strange variance with the indifferent kindness wherewith she had hitherto seemed to regard her father's English guest. Certainly, he thought, her nerves must be very much on edge. Had he not been so intensely sorry for her, he would have resented this final taunt. But as it was he merely said with a smile:

"Surely, *mademoiselle*, my contentment with my own lot, and any other feelings of which I may be possessed, are of such very

little consequence—seeing that they are only the feelings of a commonplace tradesman—that they are not worthy of being discussed.”

Her manner changed; the contemptuous look vanished from her eyes, the sarcastic curl from her lips, and she looked up at Bobby with a winning smile and an appeal for forgiveness.

“Your pardon, sir,” she said softly. “I was shrewish and ill-tempered, and deserve a severe lesson in courtesy. I did not mean to be disagreeable,” she added with a little sigh, “but my nerves are all aquiver to-day, and this awful news has weighed upon my spirit.”

“What awful news, *mademoiselle*?” he asked.

“Surely you have heard?”

“You mean the rumor about Napoleon?”

“I mean the awful certainty,” she retorted with a sudden outburst of vehemence, “that that brigand, that usurper, that scourge of mankind, has escaped from an all too lenient prison. I mean that all the horrors of the past twenty years will begin again now—misery, starvation, exile probably. Oh, surely,” she added with ever-increasing passion, “surely God will not permit such an awful thing to happen! Surely He will strike the ogre dead, ere he devastates France once again!”

“I am afraid that you must not reckon quite so much on divine interference, *mademoiselle*. A nation, like every single individual, must shape its own destiny, and must not look to God to help it in its political aims.”

“And France must look once more to England, I suppose. It is humiliating to be always in need of help!”

“Each nation in its turn has it in its power to help a sister. Sometimes help may come from the weaker vessel. Do you remember the fable of the lion and the mouse? France may be the mouse just now; some day it may be in her power to requite the lion.”

She shook her head reprovingly.

“I don’t know,” she said, “that I approve of your calling France—the mouse.”

“I only did so in order to drive my parable still further home.” She looked a little puzzled, and he continued: “Mlle. Crystal, if you will allow me to speak of such an insignificant person as I am, I am at present in the position of the mouse with regard to your father and yourself—the lions of my parable. You might so easily have devoured me, you see,” he added with a touch of humor. “Well, the time may come when you will have need of a friend, just as I had need of one when I came here—a stranger in a strange land. Events will move with great rapidity in the next few days, and

the mouse might at any time be in a position to render a service to the lion. Will you remember that?”

“I will try, *monsieur*,” she replied.

But already her pride was once more up in arms. She did not like his tone, or the air of protection that his attitude suggested. She could not think of any eventuality which would place the Comte de Cambray de Brestalou in serious need of a tradesman for his friend.

Then, as quickly, her mood softened again, and as she raised her eyes to his he saw that they were full of tears.

“Indeed, indeed,” she said gently, “I do deserve your contempt, sir, for my shrewishness. How can I—how can any of us—afford to turn our backs upon a loyal friend? To-day, too, of all days, when that awful enemy is once more at our gates! Oh!” she added, clasping her hands together with a sudden gesture of passionate entreaty. “You are English, sir—a friend of the gallant gentlemen who saved my dear father and his family from those awful revolutionaries. You will be loyal to us, will you not?”

“Have I not already offered you my humble services, *mademoiselle*?” he replied earnestly. “Is there anything that I can do for you—now, at once, I mean? If there is, I do entreat you to let me serve you.”

Had the pure soul of the woman been touched by the fringe of the magnetic wave of passion that nearly swept Clyffurde off his feet? Did something of the man’s suffering, of his love, and of his despair, appear upon his face? And thus made visible, did it cause that invisible barrier of social prejudices to totter and to break? It were difficult to say.

Certain it is that Crystal’s whole heart warmed to the stranger as it had never warmed before. She felt that here was a *man* standing before her now, whose promises would never be mere idle words, whose deeds would speak more loudly than his tongue. She felt that in the midst of all the enmities that encompassed her and her father, here at any rate was a friend on whom they could count to help, to counsel, and to accomplish. And, deep down in the very bottom of her soul, there was a strange, inexplicable longing that circumstances might one day compel her to ask for his help, and a sweet knowledge that that help would be ably rendered and pleasing to receive.

But for the moment, of course, there was nothing that she could ask. She would be married in a couple of days, and after that it would be to her husband that she must look for devotion, for guidance, and for sympathy.

A little sigh of regret escaped her lips, and she said gently:

"I thank you, sir, from the bottom of my heart, for the words of friendship which you have spoken. I shall never forget them, never! If at any time in my life I am in trouble—"

"Which God forbid!" he broke in fervently.

"If any time I have need of a friend," she resumed, "I feel that I should find one in you. Oh, if only I could think that you would extend your devotion to my poor country and to our king!" she exclaimed with passionate earnestness.

"You love your country very dearly, *mademoiselle*."

"I think that I love France more than anything else in the world," she replied. "I feel that there is no sacrifice which I would deem too great to offer up for her."

"And by France you mean the Bourbon dynasty," he said, almost involuntarily, and with an impatient little sigh.

"I mean the king, by the grace of God!" she retorted proudly.

She had thrown back her head with an air of challenge as she said this, meeting his glance eye to eye. All of a sudden she looked strong and determined, no longer girlish and submissive. To the man who loved her, this trait of power and latent heroism added yet another to the many charms which he saw in her. Loyal to her country and to her king, she would be loyal in all things—to husband, to kindred, and to friends.

But he realized at the same time how impossible it would be for any man to win and keep her love if he were an enemy to her cause. Saint-Genis—royalist, *émigré*, adherent of the old régime—had obviously won his way to her heart chiefly by the sympathy of their convictions. But what of De Marmont, to whom she was on the eve of plighting her troth? The hot-headed young Bonapartist owned but one god—Napoleon; and yet he had deliberately, and with cynical opportunism, hidden his fanatical partizanship from the woman whom he had wooed and won.

The thought of that deception, and of the awakening which awaited the girl-wife, was terribly repellent to Clyffurde's straightforward, loyal nature. Bitter was the contention within his soul as he found himself at the crossroads of a divided duty.

Every instinct of chivalry toward the woman loudly demanded that he should warn her—now, at once, before it was too late, before she had actually pledged her life and future to a man whom her very soul, if she knew the

truth, would proclaim a renegade and a traitor. Every instinct of loyalty to the man—that male solidarity of sex which will never permit one man, if he be a gentleman, to betray another—prompted him to hold his peace.

His heart rebelled, contending that to remain silent was cowardly—that his first duty was to the woman whom he loved better than his soul. Then ingrained principles, born and bred in the bone of him, threw themselves into the conflict and warned him that if he spoke he would be no better than an informer, meriting the contempt alike of those whom he wished to help and of the man whom he would betray.

It was a sound coming from below that settled the dispute 'twixt heart and reason—the sound of De Marmont's voice. Though he was apparently speaking of indifferent matters, it had the same triumphant ring in it which Clyffurde had heard out at Notre-Dame de Vaux that morning.

The sound had caused Crystal to give a quick gasp and to clasp her hands against her breast, as she said with a nervous little laugh:

"Imagine how happy we are to have M. de Marmont's support in this terrible crisis! His influence in Grenoble and in the whole province is very great. His word in the town itself may incline the whole balance of public feeling on the side of the king, and may even help to strengthen the loyalty of the troops. Oh, that Corsican brigand little guesses what kind of welcome we in the Dauphiné are preparing for him!"

Her enthusiasm, her trust, her loyalty ended the conflict in Clyffurde's mind far more effectually than any sober reasoning could have done. He realized in a moment that neither abstract principles, nor his own feelings in the matter, were of the slightest account at such a juncture.

What was obvious and not to be shirked was his duty to a woman who was on the point of being shamefully deceived. To remain silent would be cowardly—of that he became absolutely certain. When once Clyffurde made up his mind what duty was, no power on earth could make him swerve from its fulfilment.

"Mlle. Crystal," he began slowly and deliberately, "just now, when I was bold enough to offer you my friendship, you deigned to accept it, did you not?"

"Indeed I did, sir," she replied, a little astonished. "Why should you ask?"

"Because the time has come sooner than I expected for me to prove the truth of that offer to you. There is something which, if I am your friend, I must say to you. May I?"

But before she could reply, her father's voice and De Marmont's rang out from the farther end of the room. The folding doors had been thrown open. The Comte de Cambray and his son-in-law elect were on the point of entering, and had paused for a moment just on the threshold. De Marmont was talking in a loud voice, and apparently in response to something which the count had just told him.

"Ah!" he said. "*Madame la duchesse* will be leaving Brestalou? I am sorry to hear that. Why should she go so soon?"

"An affair of business, my dear De Marmont," replied the count. "I will tell you about it at an early opportunity."

There came a hubbub of talk in the corridors outside, the sound of greetings, the pleasing confusion of questions and answers which marks the simultaneous arrival of several guests.

Crystal rose and turned to Clyffurde with a smile.

"You will have to tell me some other time," she said lightly. "Don't forget!"

The psychological moment had gone by. Clyffurde cursed himself for having fought too long against the promptings of his heart, and for having lost the precious opportunity which might have changed the whole of Crystal's future. He cursed himself for not having spoken sooner, now that he saw Victor de Marmont approach his beautiful *fiancée* and with the air of a conqueror raise her hand to his lips.

Crystal de Cambray looked very pale. To the man who loved her so ardently and so hopelessly it seemed as if she gave a curious little shiver, and that for one brief second her blue eyes flashed a pathetic look of appeal up to his.

Meanwhile, other guests followed closely on the triumphant bridegroom's heels. Among the foremost were M. Fourier, fussy and nervous, secretly delighted at the idea of affixing his official signature to such an aristocratic *contrat de mariage*, and *madame la préfète*, resplendent in the latest fashion from Paris. Then came the Duc and Duchesse d'Embrun, cousins of the bride, and Vicomte de Gènevois, with his mother, who was Abbess de Pont Haut and godmother by proxy to Crystal de Cambray. General Marchand, in command of the troops of the district, fresh from the council of war which he had hastily convened, was trying to hide his anxiety behind a debonair manner.

The chief notabilities of the province had assembled to do honor to the occasion. Later on others would come, lesser lights than this

selected crowd, who would partake of the *souper des fiançailles* before the *contrat* was signed in their presence as witnesses to the transaction.

Every one was talking volubly. Napoleon's progress through France—no longer to be denied—was the chief subject of conversation. Some spoke of it with contempt, others with terror. Fourier and Marchand, both former Bonapartists, were loudest in their curses against "the usurper."

Clyffurde, silent and keeping somewhat aloof from the brilliant throng, saw that De Marmont did not enter into this discussion. He kept resolutely close to Crystal, speaking to her from time to time in a whisper, and always with that assured air of the conqueror which grated so unpleasantly on the Englishman's nerves.

The count, affable and gracious, spoke a few words to each of his guests in turn, while the Duchesse d'Agen^s was talking openly of her forthcoming return journey to the north.

"I came in great haste," she said loudly, to the circle of ladies gathered around her, "for my little Crystal's wedding; but I was in the middle of a Lenten retreat at the Sacred Heart, and I only received permission from my confessor to spend three days in all this gaiety."

"When do you leave us again, *madame la duchesse*?" queried Mlle. Marchand, the general's daughter.

"On Tuesday, directly after the religious ceremony, *mademoiselle*," replied the duchess.

M. Fourier was trying to look unconcerned. Twenty-five millions of francs in notes and drafts had been transferred from the cellar of the Hôtel de Ville to his pockets, and thence into the keeping of *madame*. He had driven over in his private coach, in an agony of fear every time he heard the sound of hoofs upon the road behind him—for there might be mounted highwaymen about. Now he felt infinitely relieved; he had shifted the burden to more exalted shoulders than his own, and inwardly he was marveling how coolly the duchess seemed to be taking such an awful responsibility.

Presently Hector threw open the great doors and pompously announced that *monsieur le comte* was served. Through the corridor beyond appeared a vista of liveried servants in purple and canary, wearing powdered perukes, silk stockings, and buckled shoes.

There was a general hubbub in the room as the men moved toward the ladies who had been assigned to them for partners. The count, in his grandest manner, approached the Duchesse

d'Embrun, in order to conduct her down to supper. An air of majestic grandeur, of solemnity and splendid decorum pervaded the fine apartment.

But suddenly there was an interruption. An unseemly noise came from the farther end of the corridor, where rose the magnificent staircase. Hector's face became a study in rapidly changing expressions—from pompousness to astonishment, then to horror, and finally to wrath, when he realized that an intruder in stained clothes and booted and spurred was actually making his way through the ranks of liveried servants and loudly demanding to speak with the count.

Such a disturbance had not occurred at the *château* of Brestalou since Hector had been installed there as majordomo nearly twelve months ago. He was on the point of throwing himself upon the daring intruder, when he paused, more aghast than before. In this same intruder he had recognized the Marquis de Saint-Genis!

The young man seemed to be laboring under terrible excitement. His face was flushed, and he was panting as if he had been running hard.

"*Monsieur le comte!*" he cried breathlessly, as soon as he caught sight of Hector. "Tell *monsieur le comte* that I must speak with him at once!"

"But, *monsieur le marquis*—"

This was all that poor, bewildered Hector could stammer. His slow-moving brain was torn between the duties of his position and his respect for the marquis.

Fortunately the count himself put an end to the majordomo's dilemma. He had recognized Saint-Genis's voice, and knew at once that something grave must have happened, else the young man would never have committed such a breach of good manners. The master of Brestalou was never at a loss how to turn any situation to a dignified and proper issue. He murmured a quick and courteous apology to the Duchesse d'Embrun, and a comprehensive one to all his guests; then he hastened to meet Saint-Genis at the door.

The intruder's face was flushed. With his right hand he clutched a small riding-cane, and his glowering eyes swept a rapid glance over every one in the room.

"I must offer you my humblest apologies, my dear count," he said hoarsely, "for obtruding my very untidy person upon you at this hour. I have walked all the way from Grenoble, as I could not get a hackney-coach, else I had been here earlier and spared you this unpleasantness."

"You are always welcome in this house, my good Maurice," said the count in his loftiest manner, "and at any hour of the day. I asked you to be my guest to-night, if you remember."

"And I," said Saint-Genis, "was churlish enough to refuse. I would not have come now, only that I felt I might be in time to avert the most awful catastrophe that has yet fallen upon your house."

Again his restless eyes, charged with a look of rage and hate, wandered over the assembled company. The look frightened the ladies. They took to clinging to one another, standing in compact little groups, like frightened birds, watchful and wide-eyed. They feared that the young marquis was mad. But the men exchanged significant glances and significant smiles. They merely thought that Saint-Genis had been drinking, or that jealousy had half turned his brain.

Only Clyffurde, who stood somewhat apart from the others, knew by some inexplicable intuition what it was that had brought Maurice de Saint-Genis to Brestalou in this excited state and at this hour. He felt deeply excited, too, and mightily thankful that the catastrophe would be brought about by others, not by himself. But all his thoughts were for Crystal. An instinctive desire to stand by her, and to shield her from some unknown or unguessed evil, made him draw nearer to her.

She stood on the fringe of the little crowd, as isolated as was Clyffurde himself. De Marmont, whose face had become the color of dead ashes, had left her side. One step at a time, and very slowly, he was getting nearer and nearer to Saint-Genis, as if the latter's wrath-filled eyes drew him against his will.

At the young man's ominous words, the count's sunken cheeks grew a shade more pale.

"What catastrophe," he said, "could fall on my house that would be worse than twenty years of exile?"

"An alliance with a traitor, *monsieur le comte*," replied Saint-Genis firmly.

A gasp went round the room. The women looked in mute horror from one man to the other; the men already had their right hands on their swords. Clyffurde's eyes were fixed upon Crystal, who, pale, silent, rigid as a marble statue, with lips parted and nostrils quivering, stood not five paces away from him, her dilated eyes wandering ceaselessly from the face of Saint-Genis to that of Victor de Marmont, and thence to her father. But beyond that look of tense excitement, she revealed nothing of what she thought and felt.

Already De Marmont, his hand upon his sword, had advanced menacingly toward Saint-Genis.

"*Monsieur le marquis*," he said between set teeth, "you will eat those words, or—"

"Eat my words, man?" retorted Saint-Genis with a harsh laugh. "Have I not come here on purpose to throw them into your face?"

There was a brief but violent struggle, for De Marmont had made a movement as if he meant to spring at his rival's throat, and General Marchand and the Vicomte de G  nevois had much ado to seize and hold him. Even so they could not stop the hoarse cries which he uttered:

"Liar! Liar! Let me go! Let me get to him! I must kill him!"

The count interposed his dignified person between the two men.

"Maurice," he said, in tones of calm and dispassionate reproof, "let me tell you that your conduct is absolutely unjustifiable. You seem to forget that you are in the presence of ladies, and of my guests. If you had a quarrel with M. de Marmont—"

"A quarrel, my dear count?" exclaimed Saint-Genis. "No, I have no quarrel with him; and my conduct would have been a thousand times more vile if I had not come to-night and stopped his hand from touching that of Mlle. Crystal de Cambray—his hand which was engaged, less than two hours ago, in affixing to the public buildings of Grenoble the infamous message of the Corsican brigand to the army and the people of France!"

A hoarse murmur came from every corner of the room.

"The message? What message?"

Some people turned instinctively to M. Fourier, others to General Marchand. Every one knew that Bonaparte had landed, every one had heard the rumor that he was marching in triumph through Provence and the Dauphin  , but no one had altogether believed it. As for a message—a proclamation—a call to the army, and in Grenoble itself! No one had heard of that. Every one had been at home, getting dressed for this festive function, thinking of good suppers and of wedding-bells.

It was as if, after a clap of thunder and a flash of lightning, the house was found to be in flames. The *pr  fet*, in answer to the mute queries of other guests, shrugged his shoulders. General Marchand looked grim and silent. Saint-Genis, with arm uplifted and shaking hand, pointed a finger at De Marmont.

"Ask him!" he cried. "Ask him, my dear count, ask the miserable traitor who has stolen

his way into your house, has stolen your regard, your hospitality, and was on the point of stealing your most precious treasure—your daughter! I doubt not but a copy of that infamous message is inside his coat now. Ask him! General Mouton-Duvernet met him outside Grenoble in company with that cur Emery, and I saw him with my own eyes distributing the vile papers among our townspeople and pinning them up at the street-corners!"

While Saint-Genis was speaking—or rather screaming, for his voice, pitched high, seemed to fill the entire room—every glance was fixed upon De Marmont. Every one, of course, expected a contradiction as hot and intemperate as was the accusation. It was unthinkable, impossible that what Saint-Genis said could be true!

But as the marquis continued to speak, and worked himself up every moment into a still greater state of excitement, De Marmont seemed to calm down. He ceased to curse; he ceased to struggle, and on his face, which still was livid, there gradually crept a look of determination and of defiance. Marchand and G  nevois relaxed their grip upon his arms, since he no longer fought; and thus released, he tossed back his head and looked his infuriated accuser boldly in the face.

The Comte de Cambray would certainly have interposed at this juncture with one of those temperate speeches, full of dignity and brimming over with lofty sentiments, which he knew so well how to deliver; but De Marmont gave him no time to begin.

"What if I did pin the emperor's proclamation on the walls of Grenoble?" he said proudly, and with a tremor of enthusiasm in his voice. "The emperor, whom treachery more vile than any since the days of Iscariot sent into humiliation and exile! The emperor has come back!" cried the young devotee, with that extraordinary fervor which Napoleon alone, of all men that have ever walked upon this earth, was able to arouse. "His imperial eagles once more soar over France, carrying her honor and glory on their wings to the outermost corners of Europe. His proclamation is to his people, who have always loved him, to his soldiers, who in their hearts have always been true to him." With a kind of exultant war-cry he drew a roll of paper from his pocket and held it out at arm's length above his head. "His proclamation? Here it is! *Vive l'empereur!*"

Who shall attempt to describe the feelings of those who were assembled round the young

enthusiast as he hurled his challenge into their faces?

The Comte de Cambray became a shade or two paler than he had been before. He seemed very frail, very care-worn, all of a sudden, and his pale eyes had that look in them which comes into the eyes of the old after years of sorrow and of regret. But never for a moment did he depart from his attitude of dignity. When De Marmont's exultant cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*" had ceased to echo round the walls of the stately *château*, he straightened out his spare figure and with one fine gesture begged for silence from his guests.

"M. de Marmont," he said quietly, "this is neither the place nor the opportunity which I should have chosen for confronting you with all the lies which you have told in the past ten months, ever since you entered my house as an honored guest. But M. de Saint-Genis has left me no option. Burning with indignation at your treachery, he came here to unmask you before my daughter's hand had affixed her own honorable name beneath that of a cheat and a traitor. Yes, M. de Marmont, no one but a cheat and a traitor could thus have wormed himself into the confidence of an old man and of a young girl! No one but a villainous blackguard could have contemplated the abominable deceptions which you have planned against me and my daughter!"

For a moment or two after the old man had finished speaking, Victor de Marmont remained silent. There were murmurs of indignation among the guests. He was in the midst of a hostile crowd, and he knew it.

"*Monsieur le comte*," he said at last, making a great effort to appear unconcerned, "I wish for your daughter's sake that M. de Saint-Genis had chosen some other time to make this fracas. We who have learned chivalry at the emperor's school would have hit our enemy when he was in a position to defend himself. That, obviously, I cannot do without trespassing still further upon your hospitality, and causing Mlle. Crystal still more pain. I might even make a direct appeal to her, since the decision in this matter rests, I imagine, primarily with her; but with the emperor at our gates, with the influence of his power and of his pride dominating my every thought, I will with your gracious permission relieve you of my unwelcome presence."

"As you will, *monsieur*," said the count.

De Marmont bowed quite ceremoniously to him, and the count, courtly and correct to the last, returned his salute with equal ceremony. Then the young man turned to Crystal.

For the first time, perhaps, since the fracas began, he realized what it all must mean to her. She did not try to evade his look, or to turn away from him. On the contrary, she watched him while he approached her, without retreating one single step.

Her blue eyes were always expressive, but they had never been so expressive as they were just then. De Marmont met her glance squarely, and read in it contempt, loathing, hatred—but above all contempt. It made him wince as if he had been struck in the face with a whip.

He stood still, for he knew that she would never allow him to kiss her hand in farewell. He had had enough of insults; he knew that he could not bear that final one.

A red mist suddenly gathered before his eyes, a mad desire to strike, to wound, to kill, and with it a wave of passion—he called it love—for this woman, such as he had never felt for her before. His glance gave her back hatred for hatred; but whereas her hatred for him was smothered in contempt, his for her was leavened with a fierce and dominant desire.

All this had taken but a few seconds. The Comte de Cambray had not done more than give a sign to Hector to see M. de Marmont safely out of the *château*, and Maurice de Saint-Genis had only had time to think of interposing, if De Marmont tried to take Crystal's hand. Only a few seconds, but a lifetime of emotion was compressed into them!

With Crystal's look of loathing still eating into his soul, De Marmont caught sight of Clyffurde, who stood close by—Clyffurde, whose one thought throughout all this unhappy scene had been of Crystal. Just then some kind of instinct made the young girl look up to the Englishman—perhaps in response to a wave of memory which brought back to her, at that moment, his offer of service. Or it may have been due to that same sense which had told her at the time that here was a man whom she could always trust, who would always prove a friend, as he had promised.

The look which she gave Clyffurde was one of frank and simple confidence; and De Marmont just happened to intercept it.

He had never been jealous of the Englishman. Under no circumstances could this foreigner, this bourgeois tradesman, be a rival to reckon with. At any other time he would have laughed at the idea of Mlle. Crystal de Cambray bestowing the slightest favor upon Clyffurde; but within those few seconds everything had become different. Victor de Marmont, the triumphant and wealthy suitor of Mlle. de Cambray, had become a pariah among

all these ladies and gentlemen; he had become a man scorned by the woman whom he had wooed and thought to win so easily.

The fierce love engendered for Crystal in his turbulent heart by all the hatred and scorn that she lavished upon him, brought into being an unreasoning jealousy. He felt suddenly that he detested Clyffurde. He remembered the fellow's nationality, and its avowed hatred of the hero whom he himself worshiped. And he realized that that same hatred must of necessity be a bond between the Englishman and Crystal de Cambray.

Though this new jealousy seized hold of him with extraordinary power, though it brought before his eyes that ominous red film which makes a man strike out blindly and stupidly against his enemy, it also suggested to De Marmont a simple and efficacious way of ridding himself once for all of any fear of rivalry from Clyffurde.

When he had bowed quite formally to Crystal, he looked up at Bobby and gave him a pleasant and friendly nod.

"I suppose you will be coming with me, my good Clyffurde," he said lightly. "Of course, we are rowing in the same boat, you and I. We were a very happy party, were we not, you and Emery and I, when General Mouton met us outside Grenoble? We had just heard the glorious news that the emperor is marching triumphantly through France." Then he turned once more to Saint-Genis. "Did not the general's aide-de-camp tell you that, M. de Saint-Genis?" he said.

During these few seconds, while De Marmont held the center of the stage, Saint-Genis had succeeded in controlling his excitement, at any rate outwardly. He was so absolutely master of the situation, and had put his successful rival so completely to rout, that the sense of satisfaction helped to soothe his nerves. When De Marmont spoke directly to him, he was able to reply with comparative calm.

"Had you," he said, "attempted to deny the accusation which I have brought against you, I was ready to confront you with the report of General Mouton's aide-de-camp."

"I had no intention of denying my loyalty to the emperor," rejoined De Marmont; "but I would like to know what report General Mouton's aide-de-camp brought into Grenoble. The worthy general did not belie his name, I assure you. He looked very much like a frightened sheep when he recognized Emery!"

"He was alone with his aide-de-camp and in his coach," retorted Saint-Genis, "while you, that traitor Emery, and your friend Mr.

Clyffurde, were on horseback. You gave him the slip easily enough!"

"That's true, of course," said De Marmont simply. "Well, shall we go, my dear Clyffurde?"

He had accomplished his purpose as effectually as he could have wished.

Clyffurde had made no movement during this brief colloquy. He saw, just as De Marmont did, that every one was listening more with indifference than with horror. He was of little consequence, after all. A tradesman and an Englishman, what mattered it what his political convictions were? De Marmont was an object of hatred, but he—Clyffurde—was only one of contempt.

He heard the muttered words: "English spy!" "Informer!" and others of still more overwhelming disdain; but he cared little what these people said. Crystal had looked up to him, and was still looking, and it was that look which had driven all the blood from his face and caused his lips to set closely as if with a sense of physical pain. He could see that she had in her mind the insults which her father's guests were overtly murmuring. Her eyes were conveying them to him far more plainly than her lips could have done.

"English spy! Traitor to friendship and to trust! Liar, deceiver, hypocrite!"

That and more did her scornful glance imply; but she said nothing.

He tried to plead with eyes as expressive as were her own, and she merely turned away from him, just as if he no longer existed. She drew her skirts closer round her, and somehow with that gesture she seemed to sweep him entirely out of her existence.

Even the Duchesse d'Agen had not one glance for him. To these passionate royalists, an adherent of the Corsican ogre was lower than the scum of the earth. They loathed De Marmont because he had been one of themselves. He was a traitor, and not one man there but would have liked to see him put up against a wall and summarily shot; but the stranger they merely wiped out of their lives.

Was there any chance for Clyffurde, if he tried to defend himself? None, of a certainty. He could not call the accusation a lie, since he had been in the company of Emery and De Marmont most of the day, and mere explanation would have fallen on deaf ears.

Clyffurde knew this, nor did he attempt any apology. His pride would not allow him to utter a word in his own defense. He scorned the idea of speaking, on his own behalf, words which were doomed to be disbelieved.

In a moment he found himself absolutely isolated in the center of the room. He bowed silently and very low to Crystal and to the Duchesse d'Agen, and again to all the ladies and gentlemen who cold-shouldered him with such contemptuous ostentation. In taking leave of the Comte de Cambray, he made an effort to say, at any rate, the one word which weighed upon his heart.

"Will you at least permit me, *monsieur le comte*," he said, "to thank you for—"

But already the count had interrupted him, even before the words were clearly out of his mouth.

"I will not permit you, sir, to speak a single word other than a plain denial of M. de Saint-Genis's accusations against you." As Clyffurde relapsed into silence, the count continued with haughty peremptoriness:

"A plain yes or no will be quite sufficient, sir. Were you or were you not in the company of those traitors, Emery and De Marmont, when General Mouton came upon them outside Grenoble?"

"I was," said Clyffurde.

With a stiff nod of the head the count turned his back abruptly upon him; no one took any further notice of the "English spy." In times like these all one's friends must be above suspicion.

Clyffurde had been condemned without inquiry and without trial, but he knew that there was nothing to be said. With a firm, soldierly step he turned and walked quietly out of the room.

"Hector, see that M. de Marmont's coach is ready for him," said the count, with well-assumed indifference, "and that supper is no longer delayed." He then once more offered his arm to the Duchesse d'Embrun. "*Madame la duchesse*," he said in his most courtly manner, "I beg that you will accept my apologies for this unforeseen interruption. May I have the honor of conducting you to supper?"

CHAPTER VII

A BOLD THROW FOR EMPIRE

HAVING successfully shot his poisoned arrow and brought down his enemy, De Marmont had no longer any ill-feeling against Clyffurde. His jealousy had been short-lived; it was set at rest by the brief episode which had culminated in the Englishman's final exit from the *château* of Brestalou.

Not a single detail of that episode had escaped De Marmont's keen eyes. He had seen

the look of positive abhorrence wherewith Crystal had regarded Clyffurde; he had seen her gather her skirts away from the contaminating propinquity of the English spy; and he was satisfied. He was perfectly ready to pick up the strained strands of friendship with the Englishman, and affected not to notice the latter's absorption and moodiness.

"Can I drive you into Grenoble, my good Clyffurde?" he asked airily, as he paused on the top of the perron steps, waiting for the hackney-coach.

"I thank you," replied Clyffurde, "but I prefer to walk."

"It is eight kilometers and a pitch-dark night."

"I know my way, I thank you."

"Just as you like!"

He paused a moment, and began humming the "*Marseillaise*." Clyffurde started walking down the steps.

"Well, I'll say good night, De Marmont, and good-by, too," he said coldly.

"You are not going away?" queried the other.

"As soon as I can get the means of going."

"Troops will be on the move all over the country soon. Foreigners will be interned. You will have difficulty in getting away."

"I know that. That's why I want to make arrangements as early as possible."

"Where will you stay in the mean while?"

"Possibly at the Trois Dauphins, if I can get a room."

"I shall see you again, then. The emperor will stay there while he is in Grenoble. Well, good night, my friend," said De Marmont, extending a cordial hand to Clyffurde, who, in the dark, evidently failed to see it. "And don't take the insults of all these fools too much to heart." And he gave an expressive nod in the direction of the *château*. "They are dolts," he continued airily. "If they possessed a grain of sense, they would have kept on friendly terms with me. As that old fool's son-in-law I could have saved him from the reprisals which will inevitably fall on these royalist traitors, now that the emperor has come into his own again."

Clyffurde halted half-way down the stone steps. There was a suggestion of impending danger to Crystal in what De Marmont had said.

"What do you mean by talking about reprisals?" he asked.

"Oh, only the inevitable," replied De Marmont. "The people of the Dauphiné never cared for these royalists, you know, and haven't

learned to like them any better since the Restoration. The Comte de Cambray has been very high and mighty since his return from exile. He may yet come to wish that he had never quitted the little provincial town in England where he gave French lessons to bourgeois schoolboys. But here's that coach at last!" he continued, with the jaunty air that he had assumed since turning his back upon the reception-halls of Brestalou. "Are you sure that you would rather walk than drive with me?"

"No," replied Clyffurde, "I am not sure. Thank you very much. I think that if you don't object to my somewhat morose company, I should like a lift as far as Grenoble."

He wanted to make De Marmont talk, to hear what the young man had to say. He was anxious to learn more accurately what danger would threaten Brestalou in the event of Napoleon's successful march to Paris.

Of course, De Marmont knew nothing of Napoleon's plans and ideas save what Emery had told him; but what he lacked in knowledge he more than made up in imagination. Excitement, too, had made him voluble, and he talked freely and incessantly.

"The emperor will do this— The emperor would never tolerate that—"

Such phrases were continually on his lips. He bragged and he swaggered, launched into passionate eulogies of the emperor, and fiery denunciations of his enemies. Berthier, Clark, Fouché, Talleyrand—they all deserved death. Ney alone was to be pardoned, for Ney was a fine soldier—always supposing that Ney would repent; but men like the Comte de Cambray were a pest in any country. Bah, the emperor would never tolerate such mischief-makers and intriguers!

"They think they can deceive me," the young enthusiast chattered on. "They think I am as great a fool as they are, with their talk of the old duchess leaving Brestalou directly after the wedding! Bah, any dolt can put two and two together! The count tells me in one breath that he had a visit from Fourier in the afternoon, and that the duchess—who only arrived yesterday—would start again for Paris the day after to-morrow. He tells me with a mysterious air, and adds a knowing wink, and a promise that he would explain himself more fully later on. I could have laughed—if it were not all so stupid!"

He paused for want of breath and tried to peer through the window of the coach.

"It is pitch-dark," he said, "but we can't be very far from the city now."

"I don't see," rejoined Clyffurde, ostentatiously smothering a yawn, "what M. Fourier's visit to Brestalou had to do with the duchess's journey. You have intrigues on the brain, my good De Marmont."

And with well-feigned indifference he settled himself more cozily into the dark corner of the carriage.

De Marmont laughed.

"What Fourier's afternoon visit has to do with Mme. d'Agen's journey?" he retorted. "I'll tell you, my good Clyffurde. Fourier went to see the Comte de Cambray this afternoon because he is a poltroon. He is terrified at the thought that the unfortunate empress's money is still lying in the cellar of the Hôtel de Ville, and he went out to Brestalou in order to consult with the count what had best be done with it."

"I didn't know that any money was lying in the cellar of the Hôtel de Ville," remarked Clyffurde casually.

"Nor did I until Emery told me," rejoined De Marmont. "The money is there, though—stolen from the Empress Marie Louise by that arch intriguer Talleyrand. Twenty-five millions in notes and drafts! The emperor reckons on it for current expenses until he has reached Paris and taken over the treasury."

"Even then I don't see what the Duchesse d'Agen has to do with it."

"You don't," said De Marmont, "but I did in a moment. Fourier wouldn't keep the money at the Hôtel de Ville; the Comte de Cambray would not allow it to be deposited in his house. They both want the Bourbon to have it. So, in order to lull suspicion, they have decided that the duchess shall take the money to Paris."

"Well, perhaps," said Clyffurde with a yawn. "But are we not in Grenoble yet?"

Once more he lapsed into silence, closed his eyes, and to all intents and purposes fell asleep, for never another word did his companion get out of him until they were in the Rue Montorge. Here De Marmont had his lodgings, three doors from the Hôtel des Trois Dauphins, where Clyffurde managed to secure a room for himself.

He parted quite amicably from De Marmont, promising to call in upon him in the morning. It would be foolish to quarrel with that young wind-bag now. He knew some things, and talked of a great many more.

In Grenoble, preparations against the arrival of the Corsican ogre were proceeding apace. Throughout the day—which was the

5th of March—General Marchand had been full of confidence. The troops, he declared, were loyal to a man. They were coming in fast from Chambéry and Vienne; the garrison would and could repulse that band of pirates, and fulfil the promise which Ney had made to the king—namely, to bring the ogre to his majesty bound and gagged in an iron cage.

But on the following day, the 6th of March, many things occurred to shake the commandant's confidence. Not only was Napoleon's proclamation posted up all over the town, but the citizens were distributing the printed leaflets among themselves. One of the officers on the staff pointed out to General Marchand that the Fourth Artillery, quartered in Grenoble, was the regiment in which Bonaparte had served as a lieutenant during the Revolution. The men, it was argued, would not turn their arms against one whom they had never ceased to idolize. It would not be safe to march out into the open with men whose loyalty was so doubtful.

There was a rumor current in the town that when the men of the Fifth Engineers and the Fourth Artillery were told that Napoleon had only eleven hundred men with him, they all said:

"And what about us?"

Taking all these facts into consideration, General Marchand made up his mind to await the ogre inside the walls of Grenoble. Here, at any rate, defections and desertions would be less likely to occur than in the field. He set to work to organize the city into a state of defense. Forty-seven guns were put in position upon the ramparts that dominated the road to the south, and a company of engineers and a battalion of infantry were sent to blow up the bridge of Pont Haut at La Mure.

The royalists of Grenoble, who were beginning to feel very anxious, had assembled in force to cheer these troops as they marched out of the city. But the attitude of the engineers created a very unpleasant impression. They marched out in disorder, some of them tore the white cockade from their shakos, and one or two cries of "*Vive l'empereur*" were distinctly heard in their ranks.

At La Mure, the mayor argued very strongly against the destruction of the bridge of Pont Haut. It would be absurd, he said, to blow up a valuable bridge, since not one kilometer away there was a ford across which Napoleon could march his troops with perfect ease. The *sapeurs* murmured an assent, and their officer, Colonel Delessart, feeling the temper of his men, did not dare to insist.

He held them at La Mure to await the arrival of the infantry and further orders from General Marchand. When the Fifth was reported to have reached Laffray, Delessart marched the engineers to meet them, although it was then close upon midnight.

While Delessart and his troops encamped at Laffray, Cambronne, who was in command of Napoleon's vanguard, came up and occupied La Mure. This was on the 7th. The mayor, who had so strongly protested against the destruction of the bridge, gathered the population around him, and men, women, and children marched out along the Corps-Sisteron road in order to welcome the emperor.

It was still early morning when Napoleon, at the head of his Old Guard, entered La Mure. A veritable ovation greeted him. Every one pressed round him to see him or touch his horse, his coat, his stirrups. He spoke to the people and held the mayor and municipal officials in long conversation.

As practically everywhere else on his route, he had won over every heart; but his small column, which had been eleven hundred strong when he landed at Juan, was still only eleven hundred strong. He had only rallied four soldiers to his standard.

True, he had met with no opposition; the peasantry of the Dauphiné had loudly acclaimed him, had listened to his harangues and presented him with flowers; but he had not had a single encounter with any garrison on his way, nor could he boast of any defections in his favor. Now he was nearing Grenoble—Grenoble, which was strongly fortified and well garrisoned—and Grenoble would be the winning or losing cast of this great gamble for the throne of France.

It was close on eleven o'clock when the great adventurer set out upon this momentous stage of his journey. The Polish Lancers led the way; then came the veterans of the Old Guard with their time-worn gray coats and heavy bearskins. Some of them were on foot, others packed closely together in wagons and carts which the enthusiastic villagers of La Mure had placed at the disposal of the emperor. Napoleon himself followed in his coach, his horse being led along.

At Laffray was Delessart, much disconcerted because he had not been able to obey General Marchand's orders and destroy the bridge of Pont Haut. He had decided to await further instructions, and in the mean while to occupy the narrow defile of Laffray, as being an advantageous position wherein to oppose the advance of the ogre.

History has made a record of all that followed. It is not the purpose of this chronicle to do more than recall with utmost brevity the chief incidents of that memorable encounter—the Polish Lancers galloping back to report that the narrow pass was held against them in strong force; the Old Guard climbing helter-skelter out of their wagons, examining their arms, making ready; Napoleon stepping quickly out of his coach and mounting his charger. He is easily recognizable, with his gray overcoat, his white horse, and his bicorne hat. Presently he dismounts and walks up and down across the narrow road, evidently in a state of great mental agitation.

Delessart, at that moment, was holding hurried consultation with the Marquis de Saint-Genis, whom General Marchand has despatched to him with orders to shoot the brigand and his horde as he would a pack of wolves. But Delessart's soldiers are sullen and silent. A crowd of men and women from Grenoble have followed them thus far. These civilians work their way in and out among the engineers. In their hands they have printed leaflets, which they push into the hands or pockets of the soldiers—copies of Napoleon's proclamation.

Now an officer of the Old Guard is seen to ride up the pass. Delessart recognizes him. They were brothers in arms two years ago, and served together under the greatest military genius the world has ever known. Napoleon has sent the man on as an emissary, but Delessart will not allow him to speak.

"I mean to do my duty," he declares.

But into his voice, too, there has already crept that note of sullenness which characterized the *sapeurs* from the first.

Then Captain Raoul, aide-de-camp to Napoleon, comes up at full gallop, nor does he draw rein till he is up with the front of Delessart's battalion.

"Your emperor is coming!" he shouts to the soldiers. "If you fire, the first shot will reach him; and France will make you answerable for this outrage!"

While he shouts and harangues, the men are still sullen and silent. In the distance the lances of the Polish cavalry gleam in the sun, and the shaggy bearskins of the Old Guard are seen to move forward up the pass.

Delessart casts a rapid glance over his men. Sullenness has given place to utter discomfiture.

"Right about turn! Quick—march!" he commands.

Resistance would obviously be useless with these men who are on the verge of laying down

their arms. He forces on a quick march, but the Polish Lancers are already gaining ground. The sound of their horses' hoofs, the snorting, the clamping of arms is distinctly heard. Delessart has no option. He must make his men turn once more and face Napoleon's troops before they are attacked in the rear.

As soon as the order is given, and the two little armies stand face to face, the Polish Lancers halt and the Old Guard stand still. Napoleon tells Colonel Mallet to order the men to lower their arms. Mallet protests, but his chief reiterates the command, more peremptorily this time, and Mallet must obey. Then at the head of his old chasseurs, thus practically disarmed, the emperor—he is every inch an emperor now—walks straight up to Delessart's opposing troops.

"Here he is!" cries hot-headed Saint-Genis. "Fire, in Heaven's name!"

But the *sapeurs*—the old regiment in which Napoleon had served as a young lieutenant in those glorious days of old—are now as pale as death. Their knees shake under them, their arms tremble in their hands.

At ten paces away from the foremost ranks Napoleon halts.

"Soldiers," he cries loudly, "here I am—your emperor—do you know me?"

Again he advances, and with a calm gesture throws open his well-worn gray redingote.

"Fire!" cries Saint-Genis in exasperation.

"Fire!" commands Delessart in a voice rendered shaky with overmastering emotion.

Silence reigns supreme. Napoleon still advances, step by step, his redingote thrown open, his chest challenging the first bullet which would dare to end the bold, adventurous life.

"Is there one of you soldiers here who wishes to shoot his emperor? If there is, here I am! Fire!"

Which of these soldiers who have served under him at Jena and Austerlitz could resist such a call? His voice has lost nothing of its charm, his personality nothing of its magic. Ambitious, ruthless, selfish he may be, but to the army a friend, a comrade, as well as a god.

Suddenly the silence is broken. Shouts of "*Vive l'empereur!*" rend the air. They echo down the narrow valley, reecho from hill to hill, and reverberate upon the pine-clad heights of Taillefer. Broken are the ranks, white cockades fly in every direction, tricolors appear in hundreds. Shakos are waved on the points of the bayonets, and always, always that cry:

"*Vive l'empereur!*"

Engineers and infantrymen crowd around the little man in the worn gray redingote. He,

with the rough familiarity that bound all soldiers' hearts to him, seizes an old sergeant by the ends of his long mustache.

"So, you old dog," he says, "you were going to shoot your emperor, were you?"

"Not me, sire," replies the man with a growl. "Look at our guns. Not one of them was loaded!"

Delessart, shaken to the heart, his eyes swimming in tears, offers his sword to Napoleon. The emperor grasps his hand in friendship and comforts him with a few inspiring words.

Only Saint-Genis has looked on all this with horror and contempt. His royalist opinions are well known, his urgent appeal to Delessart to "shoot the brigand and his hordes" still rings in every soldier's ear. He is half crazy with rage, but there is an element of terror, too, in the confused thoughts which crowd in upon his brain.

Already the *sapeurs* and infantrymen have joined the ranks of the Old Guard, and Napoleon, with the eloquence of which he is a past master, is haranguing his troops. Just then three horsemen dressed in the uniform of officers of the National Guard, and wearing on their shakos tricolor cockades as large as soup-plates, arrive at a breakneck gallop down the pass from Grenoble.

Saint-Genis recognized them at a glance. They were Victor de Marmont, Surgeon-Captain Emery, and their friend Dumoulin, the glove-maker. The next moment these three men were at the feet of their beloved hero.

"Sire," said Dumoulin, "in the name of the citizens of Grenoble we hereby offer you our services and one hundred thousand francs collected in the last twenty-four hours for your use."

"I accept both," replied the emperor, grasping the hands of his three devoted friends.

Saint-Genis uttered a loud and comprehensive execration. Then he pulled his horse abruptly round with such a jerk that it reared and plunged madly forward ere it started galloping away with its frantic rider in the direction of Grenoble.

Meanwhile Grenoble itself was in a turmoil. In the barracks the cries of "*Vive l'empereur!*" were incessant. General Marchand was indefatigable in his efforts to quench the flame of disaffection, to rouse in the hearts of the soldiers a sense of loyalty to the king.

"Your country and your king!" he shouted from barrack-room to barrack-room.

"Our country and our emperor!" responded the soldiers with ever-growing enthusiasm.

The spirit of the army and of the people were Bonapartist to the core. They had never trusted either Marchand or Préfet Fourier, who had turned their coats so readily at the Restoration. They hated the *émigrés*—the Comte de Cambray, the Marquis de Saint-Genis, the Duc d'Embrun—with their old-fashioned ideas of the privileges of the nobility second only to the divine right of the king.

To them Napoleon, despite his autocracy and his militarism, represented "the people," the advanced spirit of the Revolution. His downfall had meant a return to the old régime—the régime of feudal rights, heavy taxation, and dear bread.

"*Vive l'empereur!*" was cried in the barracks and "*Vive l'empereur!*" at the street-corners.

A squadron of hussars had marched into Grenoble from Vienne just before noon—the same squadron which a few months ago, at a review by the Comte d'Artois in the presence of the king, had shouted "*Vive l'empereur!*" What faith could be put in their loyalty now?

But at the same time two infantry regiments came in from Chambéry, and on these General Marchand hoped to be able to reckon. The Comte Charles de la Bédoyère was in command of one of them—the Seventh; and though he had served in Prussia under Napoleon, he had tendered his oath loyally to Louis XVIII at the Restoration. He was a tried and able soldier, and Marchand believed in him.

The general himself reviewed both infantry regiments on the Place d'Armes on their arrival, and then posted them upon the ramparts of the city facing direct to the southeast and dominating the road to La Mure.

For two hours Colonel la Bédoyère paced the ramparts in a state of the greatest possible agitation. The nearness of Napoleon, of the man who had been his comrade in arms first and his sovereign afterward, had a terribly disturbing effect upon his spirit. From below in the city the people's mutterings, their grumbling, their sullen excitement, seemed to rise upward like an intoxicating incense. The attitude of the troops, of the gunners as well as of the garrison, and of his own regiment, worked still more potently upon the colonel's already shaken loyalty.

Then suddenly his mind is made up. He draws his sword and shouts:

"*Vive l'empereur!* Soldiers, follow me! I will show you the way to duty! Follow me! *Vive l'empereur!*"

"*Vive l'empereur!*" vociferate the troops.

"After me, my men, to the Bonne gate! After me!" cries La Bédoyère.

And to the shouts of "*Vive l'empereur!*" the regiment passes through the gate and marches along the suburban streets toward La Mure.

General Marchand, hastily apprised of this defection, sends Colonel Villiers in hot haste in the wake of La Bédoyère. Villiers comes up with the latter two kilometers outside of Grenoble. He talks, he admonishes, he scolds. La Bédoyère and his men are firm.

"Your country and your king!" shouts Villiers.

"Our country and our emperor!" respond the men.

And they go to join the Old Guard at Laffray, while Villiers in despair rides back into Grenoble.

In the town the desertion of the Seventh has had a very serious effect. General Marchand is at his wit's end. He has ordered the closing of every city gate, and still the soldiers in batches of tens and twenties at a time contrive to escape, carrying their arms with them. The royalist faction—women as well as men—spend the whole day in and out of the barrack-rooms, talking to the soldiers, trying to infuse into them loyalty to the king, and to cheer them up by bringing them wine and provisions.

In the afternoon the Marquis de Saint-Genis, frantic, exhausted, his horse covered with lather, comes back with the story of the pass of Laffray, and of Napoleon's triumphant march toward Grenoble. Marchand makes up his mind to retire from the city with his troops. It is only a strategical measure, he argues, to prevent bloodshed and to save his stores, pending the arrival of the Comte d'Artois from Lyons with an army corps. He gives the order for the general retreat to commence at two o'clock in the morning.

Satisfied that he has done the right thing, he finally goes back to his quarters in the Hôtel Dauphiné, close to the ramparts. The Comte de Cambray is his guest at dinner, and toward seven o'clock the two men at last sit down to a hurried meal.

"It is of course only a question of time," says the count airily. "The Comte d'Artois will be at Lyons directly with forty thousand men, and he will easily crush that marauding band of pirates. But this time the Corsican, after his defeat, must be put more effectually out of harm's way. I, personally, was never much in favor of Elba."

"The English have a lot of islands somewhere out in the Atlantic or the Pacific," re-

sponds General Marchand with decision. "It would be safest to shoot the brigand; but failing that, let the English send him to one of those islands, and undertake to guard him well."

"Let us drink to that proposition, my dear Marchand," concludes the count with a smile.

Hardly had the two men concluded this toast, when a fearful din is heard, apparently proceeding from the suburb of Bonne. The windows of the hotel give on the ramparts, and the house itself dominates the Bonne Gate and the military ground beyond it. Hastily Marchand jumps up from the table and throws open the window. He and the count step out upon the balcony.

The din has become deafening. With a hand that slightly trembles, the general points to the extensive grounds that lie beyond the city gate. The count smothers an exclamation of terror.

A huge crowd of peasants, armed with scythes, and carrying torches which flicker in the frosty air, have invaded the slopes and flats of the military zone. They are yelling "*Vive l'empereur!*" at the top of their voices, and from walls and bastions reverberates the answering cry, "*Vive l'empereur!*" vociferated by infantrymen, gunners, and *sapeurs*, and echoed and reechoed with passionate enthusiasm by the people of Grenoble assembled in their thousands in the narrow streets which abut upon the ramparts.

And in the midst of the peasantry, surrounded by them as by a cordon, Napoleon and his small army, just reenforced by the Seventh Infantry, have halted, expectant.

Napoleon's aide-de-camp, Captain Raoul, accompanied by half a dozen lancers, comes up to the palisade which bars the immediate approach to the city gates.

"Open!" he cries loudly, so loudly that his voice rises above the tumult around. "Open, in the name of the emperor!"

Marchand sees it all, he hears the commanding summons, hears the thunderous cheers that greet Captain Raoul's call to surrender. To attempt to stem this tide of popular enthusiasm would inevitably be fatal. The troops inside Grenoble are as ready to cross over to Napoleon's standard as was Colonel la Bédoyère's regiment of infantry.

The ramparts and the surrounding military zone are lit up by hundreds of torches. By their flickering light the two men on the balcony can see the faces of the people, and those of the soldiers, who are even now being ordered to fire upon Raoul and the lancers.

Colonel Roussille, who is in command of the troops at the gate, sends a swift messenger to General Marchand.

"The Corsican brigand demands that we shall open the gate!" reports the messenger breathlessly.

"Tell the colonel to give the order to fire," is Marchand's peremptory response. "Are you coming with me, *monsieur le comte*?"

Wrapping his cloak around him, he goes in the wake of the messenger. The Comte de Cambray is close on his heels.

Five minutes later the general is up on the ramparts. There are two thousand men up here, twenty guns, ammunition in plenty; out there, only peasants and a heterogeneous band of some fifteen hundred soldiers. One shot from a gun, perhaps, would send all that crowd flying; the first fusillade might scatter Napoleon's little force; but Marchand cannot, dare not, give the positive order to fire. He knows that rank insubordination, positive refusal to obey, would follow.

He talks to the men, he harangues, he begs them to defend their city against this "horde of Corsican pirates." To every word he says the men but oppose the one cry:

"Vive l'empereur!"

The Comte de Cambray turns in despair to M. de Saint-Genis, who is a captain of artillery, and whose men have hitherto been supposed to be tried and loyal royalists.

"If the men won't fire, Maurice," asks the count in despair, "cannot the officers at least fire the first shot?"

"*Monsieur le comte*," replies Saint-Genis through set teeth, for his heart was filled with wrath and shame at the defection of his men, "the gunners have declared that if the officers shoot, the men will shatter them to pieces with their own batteries!"

The crowds outside the gate itself are swelling visibly. They press in from every side toward the city, loudly demanding the surrender of the town.

"Open the gates! Open!" they shout.

Already they have broken down the palisades which surround the military zone; they pour down the slopes against the gate. But the latter is heavy and massive, studded with iron, stoutly resisting ax or scythe.

"Open!" they cry. "Open, in the emperor's name!"

They are within hailing distance of the soldiers on the ramparts.

"What price your plums?" they shout gaily to the gunners.

"Quite cheap," retort the latter with equal

gaiety, "but there's no danger of the emperor getting any!"

The women sing the old couplet:

*Bon! Bon! Napoleon
Va rentrer dans sa maison!*

The soldiers on the ramparts take up the refrain:

*Nous allons voir le grand Napoleon,
Le vainqueur de toutes les nations!*

"What can we do, *monsieur le comte*?" says General Marchand. "We shall have to give in."

"I'll not stay and see it," replies the count. "I should die of shame!"

Even while the two men are speaking, Napoleon himself has forced his way through the tumultuous throng of his supporters. Accompanied by Victor de Marmont and Colonel la Bédoyère, he advances as far as the gate, which still stands barred defiantly against him.

"I command you to open this gate!" he cries aloud.

"I take orders only from the general himself," replies Colonel Roussille.

"He is relieved of his command," retorts Napoleon.

"I know my duty," insists Roussille. "I take orders only from the general."

Victor de Marmont, intoxicated with his own enthusiasm, maddened with rage at sight of Saint-Genis, whose face is just then thrown into vivid light by the glare of the torches, cries wildly:

"Soldiers of the emperor who are being forced to resist him, turn on those treacherous officers of yours! Tear off their epaulets, I say!"

His shrill and frantic cries seem to precipitate the crisis. The tumult has become absolutely delirious. The soldiers on the ramparts tumble over one another in a mad rush for the gate, which they try to break open with the butt-ends of their rifles; but they dare not actually attack their own officers. In any case, they know that the keys of the city are still in the hands of General Marchand, and General Marchand has suddenly disappeared.

Feeling the hopelessness and futility of further resistance, he has gone back to his hotel, and is even now giving orders and making preparations for leaving Grenoble. Préfet Fourier, hastily summoned, is with him, and the Comte de Cambray is preparing to return to Brestalou.

"We shall all leave for Paris to-morrow, as

early as possible," he says, as he finally takes leave of the general and the *préfet*. "We shall take the money with us, of course. If the king—which God forbid—is obliged to leave Paris, it will be most acceptable to him, until the day when the allies are once more in the field, and ready to crush—irretrievably, this time—this Corsican scourge of Europe!"

One or two of the royalist officers have succeeded in massing together some two or three hundred men out of several regiments, who appear to remain loyal. Saint-Genis is not with them; his men had been among the first to cry "*Vive l'empereur!*" when ordered to fire. They had even gone so far as to threaten their officers' lives.

Now, covered with shame, and boiling with wrath at the defection, Saint-Genis asks leave of the general to escort the Comte de Cambray and his party to Paris.

"We shall be better off for extra protection," urges the count, in support of Saint-Genis's plea. "I shall have only the coachman and two postilions with me. M. de Saint-Genis would be of assistance in case of attack."

"The road to Paris is quite safe, I believe," says General Marchand, "and at Lyons you will meet the army of the Comte d'Artois; but perhaps M. de Saint-Genis had better accompany you as far as there, at any rate. He can then report himself at Lyons. Twenty-five millions is a large sum, of course; but the purpose of your journey has remained a secret, has it not?"

"Of course," says the count unhesitatingly, for he has completely erased Victor de Marmont from his mind.

"Well, then, all you need fear is an attack from footpads—and even that is unlikely," concludes General Marchand, who by now is in a great hurry to go. "But M. de Saint-Genis has my permission to escort you."

The general entrusts the keys of the Bonne Gate to Colonel Roussille. He has barely time to execute his hasty flight, having arranged to escape from Grenoble by the Saint-Laurent Gate, on the north of the town.

In the mean while a carter from the suburb of Saint-Joseph, outside the Bonne Gate, has harnessed a team of horses to one of his wagons and brought along a huge joist. Twenty pairs of willing arms are already manipulating this powerful engine for the breaking open of the resisting gate. Already the doors are giving way, the hinges creak; and while General Marchand and *Préfet* Fourier, with their small body of faithful soldiers, rush precipitately across the deserted streets of the

town, Colonel Roussille makes ready to open the gate to the emperor and his soldiers.

"My regiment was prepared to turn against me," he says to his men, "but I shall not turn against them."

Then he formally throws open the gate.

Ecstatic enthusiasm succeeds the frantic cries of a while ago. Napoleon, entering the city of Grenoble, was nearly crushed to death by the frenzy of the crowd. Cheered to the echo, surrounded by a delirious populace which hardly allowed him to move, it was hours before he succeeded in reaching the *Hôtel des Trois Dauphins*, where he had decided to spend the night, since it was kept by an ex-soldier, one of his own Old Guard.

The enthusiasm was kept up all night. The town was illuminated. Until dawn men and women paraded the streets singing the "*Marseillaise*" and shouting "*Vive l'empereur!*"

In a small room, simply furnished, but cozy and comfortable, the great adventurer who had conquered half the world and lost it, and who had now set out to conquer it again, sat with a few of his most faithful friends—Cambronne and Raoul, Victor de Marmont and Emery.

Spread out on the table was a map of the province. His clenched hand rested upon it; his eyes gazed out straight before him, as if through the bare, whitewashed walls of this humble room he saw a vision of the brilliant halls of the Tuileries, the imperial throne, the empress beside him, all her faithlessness and pusillanimity forgiven, his son whom he worshiped, his marshals grouped around him. With a gesture of proud defiance he threw back his head and said loudly:

"Until to-day I was only an adventurer. To-night I am a prince once more!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE MILLIONS OF THE EMPRESS

THE next morning, in that same sparsely furnished and uncarpeted room of the *Hôtel des Trois Dauphins*, Napoleon spoke to Victor de Marmont, Emery, and Dumoulin about the money which had been stolen from the empress, and which he understood had been deposited in the cellars of the *Hôtel de Ville*.

"I am not going," he said, "to levy a war tax on my good city of Grenoble; but my good and faithful soldiers must be paid, and I must provision my army, in case I encounter stronger resistance at Lyons than I can cope with, and am forced to make a *détour*. money—the empress's money, w^h

famous Talleyrand stole from her. So you, M. de Marmont, had best go straight away to the Hôtel de Ville and in my name summon the *préfet* to appear before me. You can tell him at once that it is on account of the money."

"I will go at once, sire," replied De Marmont, "but I fear that it is too late."

"Too late?" snapped out the emperor. "What do you mean by too late?"

"I mean that Fourier has left Grenoble in the trail of Marchand, and that two days ago, unless I'm very much mistaken, he disposed of the money."

"The cur!" exclaimed Napoleon, clenching his fist. "Turning against the hand that fed him and made him what he is! Well," he added impatiently, "where is the money now?"

"Fourier turned it over to the Comte de Cambray at Brestalou," replied De Marmont without hesitation.

"Very well," said the emperor, "take a company of the Seventh Infantry with you to Brestalou and requisition the money at once."

"But if, as I believe, the count no longer has the money by him?"

"Make him tell you where it is."

"I mean, sire, that it is my belief that the count's sister and daughter will undertake to convey the money to Paris, hoping by their sex and general air of innocence to escape suspicion in connection with it."

"Don't worry me with all these details, M. de Marmont," the emperor said, with a frown of impatience. "I told you to take a company with you and to get me the money. See to it that this is done, and leave me in peace."

Napoleon hated arguing, hated opposition, the very suggestion of any difficulty. His followers and intimates knew that; already De Marmont had repented that he had allowed his tongue to ramble on. He felt that silence must redeem his blunder—silence and success in his undertaking.

He bent the knee, for this homage the great Corsican adventurer loved to receive. He kissed the hand which had once wielded the scepter of a mighty empire and was ready now to grasp it again. Then he rose and gave the military salute.

"It shall be done, sire," was all that he said.

His heart was full of enthusiasm, and the task allotted to him was a congenial one. If, as he believed, Crystal would accompany her rney toward Paris, then indeed longing for revenge for the ch he had endured on that lay evening be fully gratified. light and swinging step that

he ran down the narrow stairs of the hotel. In the little entrance-hall below he met Clyffurde. In his usual impulsive way, without thought of what had gone before or was likely to happen in the future, he went up to the Englishman with outstretched hand.

"My dear Clyffurde," he said, "I am glad to see you. I have been wondering what had become of you since we parted on Sunday last. What glorious events, eh?"

He did not wait for Clyffurde's reply, nor did he appear to notice the latter's obvious coldness of manner, but went prattling on with irrepressible volubility.

"What a man!" he exclaimed, nodding significantly in the direction whence he had just come. "A six days' march, mostly on foot and along steep mountain paths, yet to-day he is as fresh and vigorous as if he had just spent a month's holiday at some pleasant watering-place! What luck to be serving such a man! And what luck to be able to render him really useful service! The tables will be turned, eh, my dear Clyffurde?" he added, giving his taciturn friend a jovial dig in the ribs. "And what a lovely discomfiture for our proud aristocrats, eh? They will be sorry to have made an enemy of Victor de Marmont—what?"

Whereupon Clyffurde made a violent effort to appear friendly and jovial, too.

"Why," he said with a pleasant laugh, "what madcap ideas are floating through your head now?"

"Madcap ideas! Nothing more or less, my dear Clyffurde, than complete revenge for the humiliation the De Cambrays put upon me last Sunday."

"Revenge! That sounds exciting," said Clyffurde with a smile, even while his palm itched to slap the young braggart's face.

"Of course it will be exciting. They have no idea that I guessed their little machinations. The Duchesse d'Agen traveling to Paris, forsooth! Aye, but with twenty-five millions sewn somewhere inside her petticoats. Well, the emperor happens to want his own money, if you please; so *madame la duchesse* or *mon-sieur le comte* will have to disgorge, and I shall have the pleasure of making them disgorge. What say you to that, friend Clyffurde?"

"That I am sorry for you," replied the other.

"Sorry for me—why?"

"Because it is never a pleasing task to bully a defenseless woman—and an old one, at that."

De Marmont laughed aloud.

"Bully the Duchesse d'Agen?" he exclaimed. "*Sacré tonnerre!* What do you take me for? I shall not bully her. Fifty soldiers don't

bully a defenseless woman. We shall treat *madame la duchesse* with every consideration. We shall remove twenty-five millions of stolen money from her carriage, that is all."

"You may be mistaken about the money, De Marmont. It may not be in the keeping of *madame la duchesse*."

"It may be at the *château* of Brestalou, in the keeping of the Comte de Cambray; and this I shall find out first of all. But I must not stand gossiping any longer. I must see Colonel la Bédoyère and get the men I want. What are your plans, my dear Clyffurde?"

"The same as before," replied Bobby quietly. "I shall leave Grenoble as soon as I can."

"Let the emperor send you on a special mission to Lord Grenville in London, to urge England to remain neutral in the coming struggle."

"I think not," said Clyffurde enigmatically.

De Marmont did not wait to ask him just what the refusal meant. He bade his friend a hasty farewell, then he turned on his heel, and, gaily whistling the refrain of the "*Marseillaise*," stalked out of the hotel.

Clyffurde remained standing in the narrow hall, which just then reeked strongly of stewed onions and hot coffee. He consulted his watch—it was close on midday—and finally went back to his room.

An hour after dawn on that selfsame morning the traveling-coach of the Comte de Cambray was at the perron of the *château* of Brestalou. The count had decided, at the last moment, that he, too, would journey to Paris with his sister and daughter, taking the money to his majesty, who indeed would soon be in sore need of funds.

Hopelessly discouraged by the surrender of Grenoble to the usurper, the count had come home at a late hour of the night. He discovered that with the exception of the faithful Hector and one or two scullions, his male servants had gone off in a body to Grenoble, to witness Napoleon's entry into the city. They had marched out of the *château* to the cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*" and outside the gates had joined a number of villagers of Brestalou, who were bent on the same errand.

Fortunately one of the coachmen and two of the older grooms from the stables returned in the early dawn, after the street demonstrations outside the emperor's windows had somewhat calmed down. With the routine of many years of domestic service, they had set to work to obey the orders given to them the day before, to have the traveling *berline* ready with four horses by seven o'clock.

It was very cold. The two postilions shivered under their threadbare liveries. The coachman had wrapped a woolen comforter round his neck and pulled his white beaver hat well over his brows, for the northeast wind was keen, and would blow into his face all the way to Lyons, where the party would halt for the night. He wore thick woolen gloves, and of his entire burly person only the tip of his nose could be seen between his muffler and the brim of his hat.

The count, aided by Hector, was arranging for the disposal of certain leather wallets underneath the cushions of the carriage. The wallets contained the money—twenty-five millions in notes and drafts—a godsend to the king, if the usurper should succeed in driving him out of the Tuileries.

Presently the ladies came down the perron steps, with Jeanne in attendance, carrying small bags and dressing-cases. Both the ladies were wrapped in long, fur-lined cloaks. The Duchesse d'Agen had drawn a hood closely round her face; but Crystal stood bareheaded in the frosty air. The hood of her cloak was thrown back, and her fair hair, dressed high, formed the only covering for her head.

Her face looked grave and even anxious, but wonderfully serene. She felt but little sorrow at leaving her stately home. She had hardly had time, in one brief year, to get very much attached to Brestalou. The sense of unreality which had been born in her when her father led her through its vast halls and stately parks had never entirely left her.

The little home in England, the tiny sitting-room with its bay window, and its small front garden edged with dusty evergreens, was far more real to her even now. She felt as if the last year, with its pomp and gloomy magnificence, was all a dream, and that she was once more on the threshold of reality, on the point of waking, when she would find herself again in her narrow iron bed, and see the patched and darned muslin curtains gently waving in the draft.

But for the moment she was glad enough to give herself to the delight of a sudden consciousness of freedom. The excitement of the coming adventure thrilled her. She watched with glowing eyes the preparations for the journey, the bestowal under the cushions of the money which was to help King Louis to preserve his throne. She was so sure of the justice of the king's cause, so convinced of God's wrath against the usurper, that she had no room in her thoughts for apprehension or sadness.

The journey northward in the lumbering carriage proceeded mostly in silence. None of the occupants seemed to have much to say. The Duchesse d'Agen and the Comte de Cambray sat on the back seats, leaning against the cushions. Crystal and Jeanne sat in front, making themselves as comfortable as they could.

There was a halt for *déjeuner* and change of horses at Rives, and here Maurice de Saint-Genis overtook the party. He proposed to continue the journey as far as Lyons, on horseback, riding close by the off side of the carriage.

Here, as well as at the next halt at Saint-André le Gaz, Maurice tried to get speech with Crystal; but she seemed cold in manner and unresponsive to his whispered words. He tried to reproach her, but she pleaded fatigue and anxiety, and he was glad that he had made arrangements not to travel beside her in the lumbering coach. His position on horseback beside the carriage would, he felt, be a more romantic one, and he half hoped that some enterprising footpad would give him a chance of displaying his pluck and devotion.

A start was made from Saint-André le Gaz at six o'clock in the afternoon. Crystal was getting cramped and tired. Even the fine views over the range of the Grande Chartreuse and the white plateau of the Dent de Crolles, with the wintry sunset behind it, failed to enchain her attention. Her father and her aunt slept most of the time.

After the start from Saint-André le Gaz, comforted with hot coffee and fresh bread, and with the prospect of Lyons now only some sixty kilometers away, Crystal settled herself against the cushions and tried to get some sleep. The incessant shaking of the carriage, the rattle of harness and wheels, the cracking of the postilions' whips, all combined to make her head ache and to chase slumber away. But gradually her thoughts became more dreamy, as the winter twilight faded into night, and a veil of impenetrable blackness spread itself outside the windows of the coach.

The northeast wind had not abated. It whistled mournfully through the cracks in the woodwork of the carriage, and made the windows rattle in their frames. The coachman had much ado to see well ahead of him, for the carriage lanterns threw only a weird and feeble light upon the ever-growing darkness. To right and left the bare and frozen common land stretched its lonely vastness to some distant horizon unseen.

Suddenly the cumbrous vehicle gave a terrific lurch, which sent Jeanne flying into the duchess's lap and threw Crystal with equal vio-

lence against her father's knees. There was much cracking of whips, much creaking and groaning of wheels; there were loud cries and oaths from coachman and postilions. Then another lurch—more feeble this time—more groaning, more creaking, more cries and oaths, and finally the coach settled down to an ominous standstill.

The count, roused from fitful slumbers, and trying to gather his wandering wits, put his head out of the window.

"What is it, Pierre?" he called loudly. "What has happened?"

"It's this confounded ditch, *monsieur le comte*," came in a gruff voice from out the darkness. "I didn't know the bridge had broken down. This accursed government will not look after the roads properly!"

"Are you there, Maurice?" called the count.

There was no answer. M. de Saint-Genis must have fallen back some little distance in the rear, else he surely would have heard the clatter, the shouts, and the swearing that attended the accident.

"Maurice, where are you?" called the count again; but still no answer.

"Jean, you oaf!" shouted Pierre. "Get hold of the off mare, can't you? And you, what's your name, ease the near gelding. Heavens above, what dolts!"

"Stop a moment," ordered the count. "Wait till the ladies can get out. This pulling and lurching is unbearable."

"Ease a moment," commanded Pierre stolidly. "Go to the near door, Jean, and help the master out of the carriage."

"Hark! What was that?"

It was the count who spoke. There had been a momentary lull in the creaking and groaning of the wheels, while the two postilions obeyed the coachman's orders to "ease a moment," and one of them came round to help the ladies and his master out of the lurching vehicle. Only the horses' snorting, the clamping of their bits, and pawing on the hard ground, broke the silence of the night.

The count had opened the near door, and was half out of the carriage, when a sound caught his ear which was in no way connected with the stranded vehicle and its team of snorting horses. Yet the sound came from horses—horses which were on the move not very far away, and which even now seemed to be coming nearer.

"Who goes there? Maurice, is that you?" he called.

"Stand and deliver!" came the peremptory response.

"Stand yourself, or I fire!" retorted the count, groping for the pistol which he kept inside the carriage.

"You murderous villain!" came with the inevitable string of oaths from Pierre. "You—"

The rest of the coachman's utterance was broken and muffled. Evidently Pierre had been summarily gagged. There was a short, sharp scuffle somewhere on ahead, and cries for help came from the two postilions, which were no less sharply smothered. The horses began rearing and plunging.

"One of you at the leaders' heads!" a voice shouted.

Terrified by the unforeseen attack, the three women sat motionless, clinging to one another inside the vehicle. The count, however, had not lost his presence of mind. He jumped out of the carriage, banging the door behind him, despite feeble protests from his sister. Pistol in hand, he tried with anxious eyes to pierce the inky blackness around him.

A muffled groan on his right caused him to turn in that direction.

"Release my coachman," he called peremptorily, "or I fire!"

"Easy, *monsieur le comte*," came as a sharp warning out of the night. "As like as not you would be shooting your own men in this infernal darkness."

"Who is it?" whispered Crystal. "I seem to know that voice!"

"God protect us!" murmured Jeanne. "It's the devil's voice, *mademoiselle*."

Suddenly there was another scuffle close by the door. There came the sharp report of a pistol, and then the same clear voice called out again:

"Merely as a matter of form, *monsieur le comte*!"

"You will hang for this, you rogue!" the count shouted.

Crystal had torn her hands out of her aunt's grasp, and was struggling to free herself from Jeanne's terrified and clinging embrace.

"Father!" she cried wildly. "Maurice! Maurice! Help! Let me go, Jeanne! They are hurting him!"

She had succeeded in pushing Jeanne roughly away, and had her hand on the door, when it was opened from the outside, and the flickering light of a carriage lantern fell on the interior of the vehicle. Neither Crystal nor the duchess could suppress a gasp of terror. Jeanne threw her shawl right over her head, for of a truth she thought that here was the Evil One himself.

The light illumined the lantern-bearer only

fitfully, but to the terror-stricken women he appeared to be preternaturally tall and broad, with caped coat pulled up to his ears, and an old-fashioned tricorn hat on his head. His face was entirely hidden by a black mask, and his hands by black kid gloves.

"I pray you, ladies," he said quietly, and this time the voice was obviously disguised and unrecognizable, "I pray you have no fear. Neither I nor my men will do you or yours the slightest harm, if you will allow me to examine the interior of your carriage."

The Duchesse d'Agen and Jeanne remained silent—the one from fear, the other from dignity; but it was not in Crystal's nature to submit quietly.

"This is an infamy," she protested loudly, "and you, my man, will swing on the nearest gallows for it!"

"No doubt I should if I were found out," said the man imperturbably; "but the military patrols of the Comte d'Artois don't come out as far as this. I must ask you ladies not to detain me on my business any longer. My men are at the door, and it is more than a quarter of an hour ago since we placed M. de Saint-Genis temporarily yet effectually *hors de combat*. I pray you, therefore, step out without delay, so that I may proceed to ascertain whether there is anything in this carriage likely to suit my requirements."

"You must be a madman as well as a thief," retorted Crystal, "to imagine that we would submit to such an outrage!"

"If you do not submit, *mademoiselle*," said the man calmly, "I must order my man to shoot your father in the leg."

"You would not dare—"

But the miscreant turned his head slowly round and called over his shoulder into the night:

"Attention, men! The Comte de Cambray—have you got him?"

"Aye, aye, sir!" came from the darkness.

Crystal gave a wild scream, and with an agonized gesture of terror clutched the high-way robber by the coat.

"No! No!" she cried. "No! Father! Help!"

"*Mademoiselle*," said the man quietly, releasing his coat from her clinging hands, "remember that your father is perfectly safe if you will deign to step out of the carriage without further delay."

He held the lantern in one hand; the other was suddenly imprisoned by Crystal's trembling fingers.

"Sir," she pleaded, "we are helpless trav-

elers on our way to Paris, driven out of our home by the advancing horde of Corsican brigands. Our little all we have with us. You cannot take that all from us. Let us give you some money of our own free will; then the shame of robbing helpless women will not rest upon you. Have pity upon us! Your voice is so gentle, you must be good and kind. You will let us proceed on our way, will you not? I swear to you that you will be doing a far finer deed than you can possibly dream of."

"I have some jewelry about my person," interposed the duchess's sharp voice. "I agree to what my niece says. We'll swear to do nothing against you when we reach Lyons, if you will be content with what we give you of our own free will and let us go in peace."

The man allowed both ladies to speak without interruption. He even allowed Crystal's dainty fingers to cling around his gloved hand for as long as she chose. Perhaps he found pleasure in this tearful appeal from such beautiful lips, for Crystal looked divinely pretty just then, with the flickering light of the lantern throwing her fair head into bold relief against the surrounding gloom. Her blue eyes were shining with unshed tears, her mouth was quivering with the piteousness of her appeal.

But when the duchess had finished speaking, and began to divest herself of her rings, he released his hand very gently and said in his even, quiet voice:

"Your pardon, *madame*, but as it happens I have no use for ladies' trinkets. All that you have been good enough to tell me only makes me the more eager to examine the contents of this carriage."

"You impious malapert!" she cried out wrathfully. "Would you dare lay hands upon a woman?"

"No, *madame*, certainly not," he replied. "As I have had the honor to tell you, I will merely order my men to shoot the Comte de Cambray in the leg. Attention, men!" he called once more over his left shoulder.

"It is no use, *ma tante*," interposed Crystal. "We must yield to brute force. Let us get out and allow this abominable thief to wreak his impious will with us, else we lay ourselves open to further outrage at his hands. Be sure that retribution, swift and certain, will overtake him!"

"Come, that's wisely spoken," said the man, who seemed in no way perturbed by the scornful glances which Crystal and the duchess freely darted upon him. He stood a little aside, holding the door open for them to step out of the carriage.

"Where is the Comte de Cambray?" queried Crystal as she brushed past him.

"Close by," he replied. "To your right, *mademoiselle*. He is perfectly safe. The Marquis de Saint-Genis is not two hundred meters away, equally secure and equally safe. Here, Le Bossu," he added, calling out into the night, "ease the gag round your prisoner's mouth a little, so that he may speak to the ladies."

While the duchess groped her way along in the direction whence came confused sounds, proclaiming the presence of men held captive by others, Crystal remained beside the carriage door as if rooted to the spot. The feeble light of the lantern had shown her that the masked miscreant had taken every precaution for the success of his nefarious purpose. How many men he had with him she could not guess; half a dozen, perhaps, seeing that her father, the coachman, and two postilions had been overpowered and were being closely guarded. Moreover, she saw that two men at least were standing behind their chief at this moment, in order to ward off any possible attack from the rear, while he himself was engaged in robbing the coach.

Crystal saw him start to work in a most methodical manner. He had set the lantern on the floor of the carriage, and was turning over every cushion and ransacking every pocket. The leather wallets, which he found, he examined with utmost coolness, speedily discovering that they were stuffed full of banknotes and drafts. His caped coat appeared to have immense pockets, into which the precious wallets disappeared one by one.

She knew, of course, that resistance was useless. The occasional glint of lantern-light upon the pistols held by the men close beside her taught her the salutary lesson of silence and dignity. She clenched her hands until her nails were almost driven into the flesh of her palms, and her face glowed with a fierce and passionate resentment.

The money which might have saved the king and France from the usurper's invasion was now the booty of a common thief! Wild thoughts of vengeance coursed through her brain. She felt like a tiger-cat that was being robbed of its young. Once, unable to control herself, she made a wild dash forward; but immediately her hands were seized, and an ominous word of command rang out through the night.

"Resistance here! Attention over there!"

Her father's safety was a guarantee of her own acquiescence. It was useless to struggle. The thief must be left to do his work in peace.

It did not take long. A minute or two later he stepped out of the carriage, ordered one of his followers to hold the lantern, and then quietly took up his stand beside the open door.

"Now, ladies, if you desire it," he said calmly, "you may continue your journey. Your men are close by, on the road, securely bound. M. de Saint-Genis is not far off—straight up the road—you cannot miss him. We leave you free to loosen their bonds. To horse, my men!" he added in a loud, commanding voice. "Le Bossu, hold my horse a moment. Ladies, I pray you accept my humble apologies that I do not stop to see you safely installed."

As in a dream, Crystal saw vague forms moving about hurriedly, she heard the clamping of bits, the clatter of stirrup and bridle. The masked man was the last to move. After he had given the order to mount, he stood for nearly a minute by the carriage door, exactly facing Crystal, not five paces away. Before he finally turned to go, he had the audacity slightly to raise his hat and to make her a courteous bow.

Crystal had taken one step backward just then—whether because she was afraid that the man would try to approach her, or simply from an instinctive sense of dignity, she could not herself have said. Certain it is that she did move back, and that in so doing her foot came in contact with an object lying on the ground. The shape and size of it were unmistakable. It was a pistol, which the count must have dropped when first he stepped out of the carriage.

Moved by the irresistible impulse which has so often caused women, in time of war, to turn against the assailants of their men or the devastators of their homes, Crystal picked up the weapon without a moment's hesitation. She knew that it was loaded, and she knew how to use it. Even as the masked man moved away into the darkness, she fired in the direction whence his firm footsteps still sent their repeated echo.

The report died out in the still, frosty air. Crystal vainly strained her ears to catch the sound of a fall or a groan; but in the confusion that ensued she could not distinguish any individual sound. She knew that the duchess and Jeanne screamed, she heard a few loud curses, the clatter of bits and bridles, the snorting of horses, and presently the noise of several mounted men galloping away in the direction of Chambéry; and that was all.

The count, the coachman, and the two postilions were lying helpless and bound some-

where in the darkness. It took the three women some time to find and release them.

With great presence of mind, Crystal had run to the horses' heads, directly after she had fired that random shot. The frightened animals had reared and plunged, and had thereby succeeded in dragging the heavy carriage out of the ditch. The brave girl's steady hand on the leaders' bridles, her soothing voice, and the absence of further alarming noises, tended at once to quiet the team—a set of good, steady Normandy draft-horses, which had not had any undue quantity of corn to heat their sluggish blood.

While Crystal stood at her post, the duchess, cool and practical, found her way first to the count, then to the coachman and postilions; and ordering Jeanne to help her, she succeeded in freeing the men from their bonds.

Then, calling to one of them to precede her with a lantern, she started on the quest for Maurice de Saint-Genis. He was found, as that abominable thief had said, some two hundred yards up the road, very securely bound, and with his own handkerchief tied over his mouth, but otherwise comfortably laid on a dry bit of roadside grass.

The duchess would not reply to his questions, but after he was released and able to stand up she made him give her a brief account of his adventure. It had all been so sudden and so quick. He had fallen back a little behind the carriage as soon as the night set in, as he thought it safer to keep along the edge of the road. He was feeling tired and drowsy, and allowing his horse to amble along in the slow jog-trot peculiar to its race.

All at once, in the darkness, some one seized hold of his horse by the bridle and forced it back upon its haunches. The next moment Maurice felt himself grabbed by the leg, and dragged off his horse. He shouted for help, but the carriage was some distance ahead, and its own rattle prevented the shouts from being heard. After which he was bound and gagged and summarily left to lie by the roadside. He had had no chance against the ruffians, for they were numerous, but they did not attempt to ill-use him in any way.

Slowly hobbling toward the carriage beside the duchess, for he was cramped and stiff, Maurice told her all there was to tell. He had heard the distant scuffle, the shouts and calls, also one pistol-shot at the end; but he had been rendered helpless even before the carriage had come to a halt in the ditch.

It was the Comte de Cambray who gave him the details of this awful adventure—the

ransacking of the carriage, the loss of the twenty-five millions, the complete shattering of all hope of helping the king in the hour of his need; and finally Crystal's desperate act of revenge, as she shot the pistol off into the darkness, hoping at least to disable the impudent rogue.

When the count finished speaking, and with a sigh of discouragement suggested an immediate continuation of the journey, Maurice said resolutely:

"Do you go on straight to Lyons with the ladies, my dear count, but I shall not leave this neighborhood till by some means or other I find those miscreants and lay their infamous leader by the heels!"

"Well spoken, Maurice," said M. de Cambray; "but how will you do it? It is late, and the night is darker than ever."

"You must spare me one of your horses, my dear count," replied the young man, "as mine has apparently been stolen by those abominable thieves. I'll ride back to the nearest village—you remember we passed it not half an hour ago. I'll try to get some information there. In the mean while you will see the Comte d'Artois, tell him all that has happened, and beg him to send me a dozen cavalymen or so, to help me scour the country. I'll be on the lookout for them on this road by six o'clock in the morning, and, please God, the day shall not go by before we have those infamous marauders by the heels. They are sure to leave some trace of their whereabouts."

He appeared so confident and so cheerful that some of his optimism infected the count, who promised to get an audience with the Comte d'Artois that very evening.

"God grant you success, Maurice," he added fervently; and the young man's energy and enthusiasm were also rewarded by a glowing look from Crystal.

A quarter of an hour later, the coach was once more ready for departure. Pierre was ordered to make all haste for Lyons, and to drive a unicorn team of three horses instead of a regulation four. The fourth animal was detached for Maurice's use, and furnished with the saddle of one of the postilions. The other postilion had to climb up to the seat next to the coachman.

All three men were feeling not a little shamed at the sorry rôle which they had just played. They vowed revenge against the mysterious thieves who had sprung upon them unawares and in the dark, or *mordieu*, they would have suffered severely for their impudence!

In silence the Comte de Cambray, the Duchesse d'Agen, and Crystal, followed by Jeanne, reentered the carriage. No one had been hurt. The count's arms felt a little stiff from the cords which had bound them behind his back. Jeanne was inclined to be hysterical.

Crystal felt a fierce resentment burning in her heart. Somehow she had no hope that Maurice would succeed, even though she threw him at the last a kindly and encouraging smile. Her one hope was that she had inflicted a painful if not a deadly wound upon the shameless robber of the king's money.

Soon the party was once more comfortably settled, and the cumbrous vehicle, after another violent lurch, was again on its way.

"Farewell, Maurice! Good luck!" called the count.

The young man waited until the heavy carriage swung more easily upon its springs; then he mounted his horse, turned its head in the opposite direction, and rode slowly back along the road.

Inside the vehicle all was silent for a while. Then M. le Comte asked quietly:

"Did he find everything?"

"Everything!" replied Crystal.

"I put in five wallets."

"Yes—he took them all."

"It is curious they should have fallen on us just by that broken bridge."

"They were lying in wait for us, of course."

"Knowing that we had the money, do you think?" asked the count.

"Of course," replied Crystal with a note of bitter resentment still in her voice.

"But who, besides ourselves and the *préfet*—?" began the count.

"Victor de Marmont, for one," replied the girl.

"Surely you don't suppose that he would play the rôle of a highwayman, and—"

"No, I don't," she broke in. "He wouldn't have the pluck, for one thing; and moreover, the masked man was considerably taller than Victor."

"Well, then?"

"It is only an idea, father dear," she said, "but somehow I cannot believe that it was just an ordinary highway robbery. This road is supposed to be quite safe; travelers are not warned against armed highwaymen, and marauders wouldn't be so well horsed and clothed. My belief is that it was a paid gang stationed at the broken bridge on purpose to rob us, and no one else. They knew our names, you remember."

"Maurice will be after them to-morrow, and

I'll see the Comte d'Artois as soon as we get to Lyons," said the count after a pause, during which he was obviously pondering his daughter's suggestion.

"It won't be any use, father," Crystal said with a sigh. "The whole thing has been organized, I feel sure, and the head that planned this abominable robbery will know how to place his booty in safety."

The count also sighed, for he was too well-bred to curse in the presence of his daughter and his sister. The duchess had said nothing all this while; nor did she once mention the mysterious robbery during the next stage of the wearisome journey.

Less than an hour later the coach came to a halt once more, and the count, who had been dozing, woke up with a start.

"What is it now?" he exclaimed.

Crystal had not been asleep, but the rumble of the wheels had prevented her from hearing the rapid approach of a number of horses in the wake of the coach, until a loud and peremptory voice cried:

"Halt, in the name of the emperor!"

"What is it now?" she murmured, repeating her father's words.

The air was full of sounds denoting the presence of many horses and of many men—the clinking of metal, the champing of steel bits, brief words of command which proclaimed the men to be soldiers. They appeared to be all round the coach.

The count put his head out of the window.

"What is it now?" he asked again.

"In the name of the emperor!" was the loud reply.

"I know of no such person in France," said the count. "*En avant, Pierre!*"

"You urge those horses on at your peril, coachman," was the defiant retort.

Obviously the coach had not been stopped by a troop of mounted soldiers for the mere purpose of proclaiming the emperor's name on the highroad in the dark. The same commanding voice which had answered the count's challenge was giving rapid orders to dismount and to bring along one of the carriage lanterns.

The next moment the door of the coach was opened from without, and the lantern, held up by a man in uniform, threw its light on the figure of Victor de Marmont.

"*Monsieur le comte*," he said coldly, "in the name of the emperor I must demand from you the restitution of his property."

The count shrugged his shoulders and vouchsafed no reply.

"*Monsieur le comte*," said De Marmont, more peremptorily this time, "I have with me twenty-four men, who will seize by force, if necessary, that which I command you to give up voluntarily."

Still no reply. The Comte de Cambray would think himself bemeaned were he to parley with a traitor.

"As you will, *monsieur le comte*," was De Marmont's calm comment on the old man's attitude. "Sergeant," he commanded, "seize the four persons in this coach. Three of them are women, so be as gentle as you can. Go round to the other door first."

"Father," urged Crystal gently, "do you think that this is wise—or dignified?"

"Wisely spoken, Mlle. Crystal," rejoined De Marmont. "Have I not said that I have with me two dozen soldiers, all trained to do their duty? Why should *monsieur le comte* compel them to lay hands upon you and *madame la duchesse*?"

"It is an outrage!" broke in the count savagely. "You and your soldiers are traitors, rebels, and deserters!"

"But we are in superior numbers, *monsieur le comte*," said De Marmont with a sneer. "Would it not be wiser to yield with a good grace? *Madame la duchesse*," he added with an attempt at geniality, "yours was always the wise head, I am told, that guided the affairs of M. de Cambray in the past. Will you not advise him now?"

"I would, my good man," retorted the duchess, "but my wise counsels would benefit no one now, seeing that you have been sent on a fool's errand."

De Marmont laughed.

"Does *madame la duchesse* mean to deny that twenty-five million francs belonging to the emperor are hidden inside this coach?"

"I deny, M. de Marmont, that any twenty-five million francs belong to the son of an impecunious Corsican attorney, and I also deny that any twenty-five million francs are in this coach."

"That is exactly what I desire to ascertain, *madame*."

"Ascertain by all means, then," said the duchess impatiently. "The other thief ascertained the same thing an hour ago, and he did so more profitably than you are like to do."

"The other thief?" exclaimed De Marmont.

"It is as *madame la duchesse* has deigned to tell you," interposed the count. "I have no objection to your knowing that I had intended to convey to his majesty the king, its rightful owner, a sum of money stolen by the Corsican

usurper from France; but an hour ago a party of armed thieves, just like yourself, attacked us, bound and gagged me and my men, ransacked my coach, and made off with the booty."

"And I thank God now," murmured Crystal involuntarily, "that the money has fallen into the hands of a common highwayman, rather than into those of the scourge of mankind!"

"*Monsieur le comte*—" stammered De Marmont, determined not to accept this extraordinary narrative.

The Comte de Cambray's dignity rose at last to the occasion.

"You choose to disbelieve me, *monsieur*?" he asked quietly.

De Marmont made no reply.

"Will my word of honor not suffice?"

"My orders, *monsieur le comte*," said De Marmont gruffly, "are to bring back to my emperor the money that is his. I will not leave one stone unturned—"

"Enough, *monsieur*. We will alight now, if your soldiers will stand aside."

And for the second time on this eventful night the Duchesse d'Agen and Mlle. Crystal de Cambray, together with faithful Jeanne, were forced to alight from the coach and to stand by while the cushions of the carriage were turned over by the light of a flickering lantern, and every corner of the interior was ransacked for the elusive treasure.

"There is nothing here, *mon colonel*," said a gruff voice out of the darkness.

A loud curse broke from De Marmont's lips.

"You are satisfied?" asked the count.

"You admit that I have told you the truth?"

"Search the luggage in the boot!" cried De Marmont savagely, without heeding him. "Search the men on the box! Bring more light here! That money is somewhere in this coach, I'll swear. If I do not find it, I'll take every one here back a prisoner to Grenoble, or—"

He paused, himself ashamed of what he had been about to say.

"Or you will order your soldiers to lay hands upon our persons—is that it, M. de Marmont?" broke in Crystal.

He made no reply, for of a truth that had been his thought. Foiled in his hope of rendering the emperor so signal a service, he had lost all sense of chivalry in the overwhelming feeling of baffled rage. Crystal's cold challenge recalled him to himself, and he felt ashamed of what he had done.

Without replying to her direct question, he made a vigorous effort to master his disappointment. He gave a brief command to his

sergeant, ordering the man to repair the disorder inside the coach, and to stop all further searching both of the vehicle and of the men.

"*Monsieur le comte*," he said with calm dignity, "I must offer you my apologies for the inconvenience to which you have been subjected. I humbly beg *madame la duchesse* and Mlle. Crystal to accept the expressions of my profound regret. A soldier's life and a soldier's duty must be my excuse for the part I was forced to take. *Madame la duchesse*, I pray you deign to reenter your carriage. *Monsieur le comte*, if there is aught I can do for you, I pray you command me."

Neither the duchess nor the count, however, deigned to take the slightest notice of the traitor's tirade. *Madame* was shivering with cold and yawning with fatigue, and in her heart she consigned the young brute to everlasting torments. The count would have thought it beneath his dignity to accept any explanation from a follower of the Corsican usurper. Without a word, he was helping his sister into the carriage.

Jeanne, of course, hardly counted. She was dazed almost to imbecility by the terrors she had gone through, so just for the moment Victor felt that Crystal was isolated from the others. She stood a little to one side—he could only just see her, as the sergeant was holding up the lantern for the duchess to see her way into the coach. The count went on to give a few directions to the coachman.

"Mlle. Crystal!" murmured Victor softly.

He made a step forward, so that she could not move toward the carriage without brushing against him; but she made no reply.

"Mlle. Crystal," he said again, "have you not one single kind word for me?"

"A kind word," she retorted almost involuntarily, "after such an outrage?"

"I am a soldier," he urged, "and had to do my duty."

"You were a soldier once, M. de Marmont—a soldier of the king. Now you are only a deserter."

"A soldier of the emperor, *mademoiselle*, of the man who led France to victory and to glory, and who will do so again, now that he has come back into his own."

"You and I, M. de Marmont," she said coldly, "look at France from different points of view. This is neither the hour nor the place to discuss our respective sentiments. I pray you, allow me to join my aunt in the carriage. I am cold and tired, and she will be anxious for me."

"Will you at least give me one word of en-

couragement, *mademoiselle*?" he urged. "As you say, our points of view are very different; but I am on the highroad to fortune. The emperor is back in France, the army flocks to his eagles as one man. He trusts me, and I shall rise to greatness under his wing. Mile. Crystal, you promised me your hand, and I have not released you from that promise yet. I will come and claim it soon."

"Excitement seems to have turned your brain, M. de Marmont," was all that Crystal said, and she walked straight past him to the carriage door.

Victor de Marmont made no further attempt to detain her. He had asked for a kind word, and she had given him withering scorn. To his credit be it said that the thought of immediate revenge did not enter his mind. He might have subjected her then and there to deadly outrage—he might have had her personal effects searched, her person touched by the rough hands of his soldiers. But though his estimate of a woman's mind and heart was a low one, it was not so base as to imagine that Crystal de Cambray would ever forgive so dastardly an insult.

As she walked past him to the coach, however, he said under his breath:

"Remember, *mademoiselle*, that you and your family are absolutely in my power, and that it is only because of my regard for you that I let you all depart from here in peace."

Whether she heard or not, he could not say. Certain it is that she made no reply, nor did she turn toward him at all. The light of the lantern lit up her delicate profile, pale and drawn, her tightly pressed lips, the look of utter contempt in her eyes, which even the fitful shadow cast by her hair over her brows could not altogether conceal.

The count had given what instructions he wished to Pierre. He stood by the carriage door waiting for his daughter. No doubt he had heard what went on between her and De Marmont, and was content to leave her to deal what scorn was necessary for the humiliation of the traitor.

He helped Crystal into the carriage, and also the unfortunate Jeanne. Finally he, too, followed, and pulled the door to behind him.

Victor did not wait to see the coach make a start. He gave the order to remount.

"How far are we from Saint-Priest?" he asked.

"Not eight kilometers, *mon colonel*," was the reply.

"Forward, then, and lose no time!" he commanded as he swung himself into the saddle.

The great highroad between Grenoble and Lyons is very wide, and Pierre had no need to draw his horses to one side as De Marmont and his troop, after much scrambling, champing of bits, and clanking of metal, rode at a sharp trot past the coach and him.

For some few moments the sound of the horses' hoofs on the hard road kept the echoes of the night busy with their resonance; but soon the sound grew fainter, and after five minutes it died away altogether. The count put his head out of the window.

"*Eh bien*, Pierre," he called, "why don't we start?"

One of the postilions cracked his whip; Pierre shouted to his horses; the heavy coach groaned and creaked, and was once more on its way.

Lyons was reached shortly before midnight. There was some difficulty in entering the town, as by orders of the king's brother, the Comte d'Artois, it had already been placed in a state of defense against the possible advance of the "band of pirates from Corsica." The bridge of La Guillotière had been barricaded, and it took the Comte de Cambray some little time to establish his identity before the officer in command of the post allowed him to proceed.

The town was fairly full, owing to the presence of the Comte d'Artois, who had taken up his quarters at the archiepiscopal palace, and of his staff, who were scattered in various houses about the town. Nevertheless, the count and his family were fortunate enough to obtain comfortable accommodation at the Hôtel Bourbon. They were very tired, and after a light supper retired to bed.

But not before the Comte de Cambray had sent a special autograph message to the Comte d'Artois, explaining under what tragic circumstances the sum of twenty-five million francs, destined to reach his majesty the king, had fallen into a common highwayman's hands. The writer begged that a posse of cavalry might be sent out on the road after the marauders, to be placed under the orders of the Marquis de Saint-Genis, who would be on the lookout for their arrival. He also begged that the posse should consist of not less than thirty men, seeing that some armed followers of the Corsican brigand were somewhere on the way.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE ROAD TO LYONS

THE weather did not improve as the night wore on. Soon a thin, cold drizzle added to

the dreariness and to Maurice de Saint-Genis's ever growing discomfort.

He had started off gaily enough, cheered by Crystal's warm look of encouragement, and comforted by a feeling of certainty that he would get even with the mysterious enemy who had so disastrously thwarted their plan to render service to the king.

Like Crystal, Maurice felt sure that no common footpad had engineered the daring attack. Positive knowledge of the money and its destination had been the fountain from which had sprung the comedy of the masked highwayman and his little band of robbers.

He mentally reckoned that there must have been at least half a dozen of these bravos, of the sort that in these times were easily hired to play any part, from that of armed escort to nervous travelers to that of seeker of secret information for the benefit of either political party. Such loafers hung round the wine-shops in search of a means of earning a few days' rations—discharged soldiers of the empire, some of them, whose loyalty to the Restoration had been questioned from the first.

It had all been very audacious and, as Maurice was bound to admit, very well carried out. As for the motive, he was never for a moment in doubt. It was a Bonapartist plot—of that he felt sure, as well as of the fact that Victor de Marmont was the originator of it. Probably he had not taken any active part in the attack, but he had employed the men—Maurice would willingly have taken an oath to that!

The Comte de Cambray must have let fall an unguarded hint in the course of his last interview with De Marmont at Brestalou; and when Victor went away disgraced and discomfited, he no doubt thought to take his revenge in the way most calculated to injure both the count and the royalist cause.

Satisfied with this mental explanation of past events, Saint-Genis had ridden on in the darkness, his spirits kept up with hopes and thoughts of a summary counter revenge. But his limbs were still stiff and bruised from the cramped position in which he had lain for so long; and presently, when the cold drizzle began to penetrate to his bones, his enthusiasm and confidence dwindled.

The nearest village seemed to recede farther and farther into the distance. He thought that when he had ridden through it, earlier in the evening, it was not very far from the scene of the attack—a dozen kilometers, perhaps; but now the distance seemed more like thirty. He had ridden on and on along the

dark road, unconscious of time, save that it was dragging on leaden-footed and wearisome; and still no light appeared ahead to betray the presence of human habitations, no distant church-bells sounded to mark the progress of the night.

At last, in desperation, Maurice de Saint-Genis had thought of wrapping himself in his cloak and getting what rest he could by the roadside, for he was very tired and saddlesore, when on his left he perceived in the far distance, glimmering through the mist, two small lights like bright eyes shining in the darkness.

What kind of a path led up to those welcome lights, Maurice had no idea; but they proclaimed the presence of human beings, of a house, of the warmth of fire; and without hesitation the young man turned his horse's head at right angles from the road.

He had crossed a couple of plowed fields and an intervening ditch, when he heard behind him the sound of horses going at a brisk trot in the direction of Lyons.

Maurice drew rein for a moment, and listened until the sound came nearer. There must have been at least a score of mounted men—a military patrol sent out by the Comte d'Artois, no doubt, and now on its way back to Lyons. Just for a second or two the young man had thoughts of joining the party and asking for help. He even gave a vigorous shout, which was apparently lost in the clang and clatter of horses' hoofs and of the accompanying jingle of metal.

He turned his horse back the way he had come; but before he had recrossed the plowed fields, the troop of mounted men—whatever they were—had passed by, and Maurice was left once more in solitude, shouting and calling in vain.

There was nothing for it, then, but to turn back again, and to make his way as best he could toward those inviting lights. In any case, nothing could be done against the highway thieves while this pitchy darkness lasted; and Saint-Genis had no fear that the Comte d'Artois would fail to send him help for his expedition against them on the morrow.

The lights on ahead were getting perceptibly nearer; soon they detached themselves still more clearly in the gloom. Other lights appeared in the immediate neighborhood—too few for a village, thought Maurice. They were grouped closely together, suggesting a main building surrounded by other smaller ones.

Soon the whole outline of the house could be traced through the enveloping darkness.

Two of the windows were lighted from within, and an oil lamp was fixed in a recess just above the door. As Maurice drew rein, he could make out the welcome words:

CHAMBRES POUR VOYAGEURS—ARISTIDE BRIOT, PROPRIÉTAIRE.

Good luck was apparently attending him for thus picking his way across fields. He had evidently come upon an out-of-the-way hostelry on some bridle-path off the main road, probably a short cut between Chambéry and Vienne.

Be that as it may, he dismounted; and having tried the door and found it fastened, he hammered against it with his boot. Presently the bolts were drawn, and an elderly man in blue blouse and wide trousers, his sabots stuffed with straw, came shuffling out of the door.

"Who's there?" he called in a feeble, querulous voice.

"A traveler—on horseback," replied Maurice. "Come, *petit père*, will you take my horse or call to one of your men?"

"It is too late to take in travelers," muttered the old man. "It is nearly midnight, and every one is abed except me."

"Too late, *morbleu*!" exclaimed the young man peremptorily. "You surely are not thinking of refusing shelter to a traveler on a night like this! Why, how far is it to the nearest village?"

"It is very late," reiterated the old man plaintively, "and my house is full."

"There's a shake-down in the kitchen, I'll warrant, and room for my horse somewhere in an outhouse," retorted Maurice.

He threw the reins into the old man's hand, and unceremoniously pushed past him into the house. The countryman appeared to hesitate for a moment or two. He grumbled and muttered something which Maurice did not hear, and his shrewd eyes—the knowing eyes of a peasant of the Dauphiné—took a rapid survey of the belated traveler's clothes, the expensive caped coat, the well-made boots, the fashionable hat, which showed up clearly now by the light from within.

Satisfied that there could be little risk in taking in so well dressed a traveler, and feeling that a good horse was always a hostage for the payment of the bill in the morning, the man turned his back on the house and led the animal away, somewhere out into the darkness—Maurice did not take the trouble to ascertain where.

He was under shelter. There was the rem-

nant of a wood fire on the hearth; some benches ran along the walls. If he could not get a bed, he could certainly get rest and warmth for the night. He put down his hat, took off his coat, and kicked the smoldering log into a blaze. Then he drew a chair close to the fire, and held his numbed feet and hands to the pleasing warmth.

Thoughts of food and wine presented themselves, now that he felt a little less cold and stiff. He awaited the old man's return with eagerness and impatience.

The shuffling of wooden sabots outside the door was a pleasing sound. A moment or two later the innkeeper had come back, and was busying himself with bolting his front door.

"Well, now, *père Briot*," said Maurice cheerily, "as I take it you are the proprietor of this abode of bliss, what about supper?"

"Bread and cheese, if you like," muttered the man curtly.

"And a bottle of wine, of course?"

"Yes, a bottle of wine."

"Well! Be quick about it, *petit père*. I didn't know how hungry I was till you talked of bread and cheese."

"Would you like some cold meat?" queried the man indifferently.

"Of course I should! Have I not said that I was hungry?"

"You'll pay for it, all right enough?"

"I'll pay for the supper before I stick a fork into it," rejoined Maurice impatiently, "but in Heaven's name hurry up, man! I am half dead with sleep as well as with hunger."

The old man—a real peasant of the Dauphiné in his deliberate manner and shrewd instincts of caution—once more shuffled out of the room. Saint-Genis lapsed into a kind of pleasant torpor as the warmth of the fire gradually crept through his sinews and loosened all his limbs, while the anticipation of wine and food sent his wearied thoughts into a happy day-dream.

Ten minutes later he was installed before a substantial supper, and worthy Aristide Briot was equally satisfied with the two pieces of silver which Saint-Genis had readily tendered him.

"You said your house was full, *petit père*," said Maurice after a while, when the edge of his hunger had worn off. "I shouldn't have thought there were many travelers in this out-of-the-way place."

"The place is not out of the way," retorted the old man gruffly. "It is on the road from Vienne to Chambéry, and we get plenty of travelers this way."

"Well! I did not strike the road, unfortunately. I saw your lights in the distance and cut across some fields. It was pretty rough in the dark, I can tell you."

"That's just what those other cavaliers said, when they turned up here about an hour ago. A noisy crowd they were! I had no room for them in my house, so they had to go."

Saint-Genis at once put down his knife and fork.

"A noisy crowd of travelers," he exclaimed, "who arrived here an hour ago?"

"*Parbleu!*" rejoined the other. "All wanting beds, too, but I had no room. I can only put up two or three travelers. I sent them on to Levasseur's, farther along the road; only the wounded man I could not turn away. He is up in our best bedroom."

"A wounded man? You have a wounded man here, *petit père?*"

"Oh, it's not much of a wound," explained the old man with unconscious irrelevance. "He himself calls it a mere scratch. But my old woman took a fancy to him; he is young and well-looking, you understand. She is clever at bandages, too, so she has looked after him as if he were her own son."

Saint-Genis had taken up his knife and fork again, though of a truth the last of his hunger had vanished. But these Dauphiné peasants were suspicious and queer-tempered, and already the young man's surprise had matured into a plan which he would not be able to carry through without the help of Aristide Briot. Noisy cavaliers, he mused to himself—a wounded man—wounded by the stray shot aimed at him by Crystal de Cambray! Saint-Genis had much ado to keep his excitement in check, and to continue with a pretense at eating, while Briot watched him with stolid indifference.

"*Petit père,*" said the young man with as much unconcern as he could affect, "I have been thinking that you have unwittingly given me an excellent piece of news. I do believe that the man in your best bedroom up-stairs is a friend of mine whom I was to have met at Lyons to-day, and whose absence from our place of tryst made me very anxious. I was imagining that all sorts of horrors had happened to him, for he is in the secret service of the king, and exposed to every kind of danger. His being wounded in some skirmish with highway robbers, or with a band of the Corsican's pirates, would not surprise me in the least. The fact that he had some mounted men with him confirms me in my belief that indeed it is my friend who is lying up-stairs,

as he often has to have an escort in the exercise of his duties." At any rate, *petit père,*" he concluded as he rose from the table, "by your leave, I'll go up and ascertain."

While he rattled off this pretty figment of his own imagination, Maurice de Saint-Genis kept a sharp watch on Aristide Briot's face, ready to note the slightest sign of suspicion, should it creep into the old man's shrewd eyes.

Briot, however, did not exhibit any violent interest in his guest's story, and when the latter had finished speaking he merely said, pointing to the remnants of food upon the table:

"I thought you said that you were hungry."

"So I was, *petit père,*" rejoined Maurice impatiently, "so I was; but my hunger is not so great as it was, and before I eat another morsel I must satisfy myself that it is my friend who is safe and well in your old woman's care."

"Oh, he is well enough," grunted Briot. "You can see him in the morning."

"That I cannot, for I shall have to leave here soon after dawn; and I could not get a wink of sleep while I am in such a state of uncertainty about my friend."

"But you can't go and wake him now. He is asleep, and my old woman wouldn't like him to be disturbed, after all the care she has given him."

Saint-Genis, fretting with impatience, could have cursed aloud or shaken the obstinate old peasant roughly by the shoulders.

"I won't wake him," he replied, irritated beyond measure at the man's futile opposition. "I'll go up on tiptoe, candle in hand. You shall show me the way to his room, and I'll just ascertain whether the wounded man is my friend or not; then I'll come down again quietly and finish my supper."

Briot still made no movement to obey, but stood scratching his scanty locks and looking puzzled and anxious.

Maurice understood the temperament of these peasants of the Dauphiné; he knew that with their curious hesitancy and inherent suspiciousness, it was always easiest to make up their minds for them. A candle stood close to his hand on the table, some kindling-wood lay in a heap in one corner; with the help of the one he lighted the other, and then, candle in hand, he walked up to the door.

"Show me the way, *petit père,*" he said.

And Aristide Briot, with a shrug of the shoulders which implied that he there and then put away from him all responsibility for what might or might not occur after this, led the way up-stairs. He paused on the upper land-

ing, pointed to a door at the end of the narrow corridor, and said curtly:

"That's his room."

"I thank you, *petit père*," whispered Saint-Genis in response. "Don't wait for me; I'll be back directly."

"He is not yet in bed," was Briot's dry comment.

A thin streak of light showed underneath the door. Saint-Genis walked rapidly toward it, knocked resolutely, and then tried the latch. The door was locked; but even as the young man hesitated for a moment, wondering what he would do next, a firm step resounded on the floor on the other side of the partition. The next moment the door was opened from within, and a peremptory voice issued the challenge:

"Who goes there?"

A tall figure appeared as a massive silhouette under the lintel. Saint-Genis had the candle in his hand. He dropped it in astonishment.

"Mr. Clyffurde!" he exclaimed.

At sight of Saint-Genis, the Englishman, whose right arm was in a sling, made a quick, instinctive movement back into the room, but Maurice had forestalled it by placing his foot across the threshold. Then he turned back to Aristide Briot.

"That's all right, *petit père*," he said. "It is indeed my friend, just as I thought. I'm going to stay and have a little chat with him. Don't wait up for me. When he is tired of my company I'll go back to the parlor and make myself happy in front of the fire. Good night!"

As Clyffurde no longer stood in the doorway, Saint-Genis walked straight into the room and closed the door behind him, leaving old Aristide to draw what conclusions he chose from the eccentric behavior of his nocturnal visitors.

With a rapid and wrathful gaze Saint-Genis at once took stock of everything in the room. At any rate the rogue could not deny his guilt. There, hanging on a peg, was the caped coat which he had worn, and there on the table were damning proofs of his villainy—a pair of pistols and a black mask.

As his uninvited visitor was apparently speechless with surprise and anger, there crept into Clyffurde's deep-set gray eyes a strange look of amusement, as if the humor of his present position was more obvious than its shame.

"And what," he asked pleasantly, "has procured me the honor at this late hour of a visit from the Marquis de Saint-Genis?"

His words broke the spell. There was no longer any mystery in the situation. The con-

demnatory pieces of evidence were there; Clyffurde's connection with De Marmont was well known; the whole plot had become obvious. Here was an English adventurer, an alien spy, who had evidently been paid to do this dirty work for the usurper. The fellow must be forced to give up the stolen money before he was handed over to the military authorities at Lyons and shot as a spy or a thief—Maurice didn't care which. The whole thing was turning out to be far simpler and easier than he had dared to hope.

"You know quite well why I am here," he said roughly. "Of a truth, for the moment, I was taken by surprise, for I had no thought that a man who had been honored by the friendship of the Comte de Cambray and of his family could be a thief, as well as a spy."

"And now," said Clyffurde, still smiling and apparently quite unperturbed, "that you have been enlightened on this subject to your own satisfaction, may I ask what you intend to do?"

"Force you to give up what you have stolen, you impudent thief!" returned the other savagely.

"And how are you proposing to do that, M. de Saint-Genis?" asked the Englishman with perfect equanimity.

"Like this," cried Maurice, whose exasperation and fury had increased every moment, as the other man's assurance waxed more insolent and more cool. "Like this!" he cried, and sprang at his enemy's throat.

A past master in the art of self-defense, Clyffurde, despite his wounded arm, was ready for the attack. With his left on guard he not only received the brunt of the onslaught, but parried it effectually with a quick blow on his assailant's jaw.

Almost stunned by this forcible contact with a set of exceedingly hard knuckles, Saint-Genis fell back a step or two. His foot struck against some object on the floor. He lost his balance, and measured his length backward across the bed.

"You abominable thief! You—you—" he cried, choking with rage and with discomfiture, as he tried to struggle to his feet.

But this he found that he could not do, seeing that a pair of firm and muscular knees was gripping and imprisoning his legs, even while that same powerful left hand had an unpleasant hold on his throat.

"Let me go, you confounded thief!" Saint-Genis cried, as soon as the unpleasant grip on his throat had momentarily relaxed.

"Easy, easy, my young friend," said the

other calmly. "I will let you go in a moment or two, as soon as I have made up my mind what I am going to do with you—whether I shall truss you like a fowl and put you in charge of our worthy host, as guilty of assaulting one of his guests, or whether I shall do you some trifling injury to punish you for trying to do me a grave one."

"Right is on my side," said Saint-Genis doggedly. "I do not care what you do to me."

"Right is apparently on your side, my friend. I'll not deny it. Therefore I still hesitate."

"Like a rogue and vagabond at dead of night you attacked and robbed those who have never shown you anything but kindness!"

"Until the hour when they turned me out of their house like a dishonest lackey, without allowing me a word of explanation."

"Then is this your idea of vengeance, Mr. Clyffurde?"

"Yes, M. de Saint-Genis, it is; but not quite in the manner that you suppose. I am going to set you free now in order to set your mind at rest; but let me warn you that I shall be just as much on the alert against another attack from you as ever I was before."

He relaxed his hold on Maurice's legs and throat, and the young man, fretting and fuming, wild with impotent wrath and with mortification, struggled to his feet.

"Are you proposing to give me some explanation to mitigate your crime?" he said roughly. "If so, let me tell you that I will accept none. Putting aside the question of your abominable theft, you have committed an outrage against people whom I honor, and against the woman whom I love."

"Nor do I propose to give you any explanation, M. de Saint-Genis," returned Clyffurde, who still spoke quite quietly and evenly. "But for the sake of your own peace of mind I do not mind telling you a few simple facts."

Neither of the men sat down. They stood facing each other across the table, whereon stood a couple of tallow candles throwing fitful, yellow lights on their faces. Those faces were strangely contrasted—both young and well looking, both strongly moved by passion, yet one entirely self-controlled, while in the other's eyes that passion glowed fierce and resentful.

"I listen," said Saint-Genis curtly.

"At the time when you fell upon me with such ill-considered vigor, M. de Saint-Genis," Clyffurde began after a slight pause, "did you know that but for my abominable outrage upon the persons whom you honor, the money which

they would gladly have guarded with their life would have fallen into the hands of Bonaparte's agents?"

"In theirs or yours, what matters?" retorted Saint-Genis savagely, "since his majesty is deprived of it now."

"That is where you are mistaken, my young friend," said the other quietly. "His majesty is much more sure of getting the money now than he was when the Comte de Cambray, with his family and yourself, started on that ill-considered errand."

Saint-Genis frowned.

"I don't understand you," he said.

"Isn't it simple enough? You and your friends credited me with friendship for De Marmont. He is hot-headed and impetuous, and words rush out of his mouth that he should keep to himself. I learned that Bonaparte had charged him to recover the twenty-five millions which Préfet Fourier had placed in the Comte de Cambray's charge."

"Why did you not warn the count then?" queried Saint-Genis, still mistrustful.

"Would he have listened to me, think you?" asked the other with a quiet smile. "Remember, he had turned me out of his house two nights before, without a word of courtesy or regret—on the mere suspicion of my intercourse with De Marmont. What credence would he have given my words. Would he even have admitted me into his presence?"

"And so—you planned this robbery—" stammered Saint-Genis, whose astonishment was rendering him as speechless as his rage had done. "I'll not believe it!" he continued more firmly. "You are fooling me, now that I have found you out."

"Why should I do that? You are in my hands, and not I in yours. Bonaparte is victorious at Grenoble. I could take the money to him and earn his gratitude, or use it for my own ends. What have I to fear from you? After to-night are we likely to meet again?"

Saint-Genis said nothing in reply. Of a truth, there was nothing that he could say. The Englishman's whole attitude bore the impress of truth. Even though that still seething wrath which refused to be appeased, Saint-Genis felt that the other was speaking the truth. Vaguely he realized that beneath the man's actions there lay a yet deeper foundation of dignity and of heroism, and one which perhaps would never be wholly fathomed.

It was Clyffurde who at last broke the silence between them.

"You, M. de Saint-Genis," he said lightly,

"would under like circumstances have acted just as I did, I am sure. The whole idea was easy of execution. Half a dozen loafers to aid me, the part of highwayman to play—an old man and two or three defenseless women—my rôle was not heroic, I admit," he added with a smile, "but it has served its purpose. The money is safe in my keeping now. Within a few days the King of France shall have it, and all those who strive to serve him loyally can rest satisfied."

"I confess I don't understand you," said Saint-Genis. "You have rendered us and the legitimate cause of France a signal service; but why did you do it?"

"You forget, M. de Saint-Genis, that the legitimate cause of France is England's cause as well."

"Are you a servant of your country, then? I thought you were a tradesman engaged in buying gloves."

Clyffurde smiled.

"So I am," he said, "but even a tradesman may serve his country, if he has the opportunity."

"I hope that your country will be duly grateful," said Maurice. "I know that every royalist in France would thank you, if he knew."

"By your leave, M. de Saint-Genis, no one in France need know anything but what you choose to tell him."

"You mean—"

"That except for reassuring the Comte de Cambray and—Mlle. Crystal, there is no reason why they should ever know what passed between us in this room to-night."

"But if the king is to have the money, he—"

"He will never know, from me, whence it comes."

"He will wish to know!"

"Come, M. de Saint-Genis," broke in Clyffurde with a slight hint of impatience, "is it for me to tell you that Great Britain has more than one agent in France these days? The money will reach the king through the hands of his foreign minister, the Comte de Jaucourt. My name will never appear in connection with the matter. I am a mere servant of Great Britain, doing my duty where I can—nothing more."

"You mean that you are in the British secret service? No? Well, I don't profess to understand the English, and you seem more incomprehensible than any I have known. Not that I ever believed that you were a mere tradesman. But what shall I say to the Comte de Cambray?"

A new train of thought seemed to alter the expression of wonderment on his face to one that was undefinable, almost furtive, certainly undecided.

"All you need say to the count," replied Clyffurde with a slight tone of impatience, "is that you are personally satisfied that the money will reach his majesty's hands safely and in due course. At least, I presume that you are satisfied, M. de Saint-Genis," he continued, vaguely wondering what was going on in the young Frenchman's brain.

"Yes, yes, of course I am satisfied," murmured the other; "but—"

"But what?"

"Mlle. Crystal would want to know something more than that. She will ask me questions. She—she will insist I had promised her to get the money back myself; she will expect an explanation, she—"

He continued to murmur these short, jerky sentences almost inaudibly. It seemed as if he shrank from meeting the puzzled and inquiring gaze of the Englishman.

When he paused—still murmuring, but quite inaudibly now—Clyffurde made no comment, and once more there fell a silence over the narrow room. The candles flickered feebly; Clyffurde picked up the metal snuffers from the table, and with a steady and deliberate hand set to work to trim the wicks.

Somewhere in the house, an old-fashioned clock had just struck two. Clyffurde looked up from his task.

"It is late," he remarked casually. "Shall we say good night, M. de Saint-Genis?"

The sound of the Englishman's voice seemed to startle Maurice. He pulled himself together, walked firmly up to the table, and, resting his hand upon it, faced the other man with an expression made up partly of suddenly conceived resolve and partly of lingering shamefacedness.

"Mr. Clyffurde," he began abruptly.

"Yes?"

"Have you any cause to hate me?"

"Why, no," replied Clyffurde with his good-humored smile. "Why should I?"

"Have you any cause to hate Mlle. Crystal de Cambray?"

"Certainly not."

"You have no desire," insisted Maurice, "to be revenged on her for the slight which she put upon you the other night?"

"I have no desire with regard to Mlle. de Cambray," replied Clyffurde quietly, "save that of serving her, if it be in my power."

"You can serve her, sir," returned Maurice

firmly, "and that right nobly. You can render the whole of her future life happy beyond what she herself has ever dared to hope."

"How?"

Maurice paused. With a gesture habitual to him he crossed his arms over his chest and paced restlessly up and down the narrow room. Then again he stood still and faced the Englishman, his dark eyes seeming to probe the latter's deepest thoughts.

"Did you know, Mr. Clyffurde," he asked slowly, "that Mlle. Crystal de Cambray honors me with her love?"

"Yes. I have understood so," replied the other quietly.

"And I love her with my heart and soul," continued Maurice impetuously. "Oh, I cannot tell you what we suffered—she and I—when the exigencies of her position and the will of her father parted us, seemingly forever. Her heart was broken, and so was mine. I endured the tortures of hell when I realized at last that she was lost to me, and was to be the wife of that low-born traitor, Victor de Marmont."

He drew breath, for he had half exhausted himself with the vehemence of his diction. Also he seemed to be waiting for some encouragement from Clyffurde, who gave him none, but sat unmoved and apparently indifferent, while the young Frenchman's suffering heart was pouring out its wails of agony into his unresponsive ear.

"The reason," resumed Saint-Genis somewhat more calmly, "why the Comte de Cambray was opposed to our union was purely a financial one. Our families are of equal distinction and antiquity, but also, our fortunes are of equal precariousness. We, sir, of the old noblesse gave up our all, in order to follow our king into exile. Victor de Marmont was rich. His fortune could have repurchased the ancient Cambray estates and restored to that honored name all the brilliance which it had sacrificed for its principles."

Still Clyffurde remained irritatingly silent.

"I trust I am making myself clear, sir?" Saint-Genis asked, somewhat tartly.

"Perfectly, so far," replied the other; "but I am afraid I don't quite see how I could serve Mlle. Crystal in all this."

"You can with one word, one generous action, sir, put me in a position to claim Crystal as my wife, and give her that happiness which she craves and which is rightly her due."

A slight lifting of the eyebrows was Clyffurde's only comment.

"Mr. Clyffurde," Maurice went on, with no

further hesitancy, "you say yourself that by taking this money to the king, or rather to his minister, you individually will get neither glory nor even gratitude; your name will not appear in the transaction at all. I am quoting your own words, remember. That is so, is it not?"

"It is so, certainly."

"But, sir, if a Frenchman—a royalist—were able to render his sovereign so signal a service, he would not only gain gratitude, but recognition and glory. A man who was poor and obscure would become rich and distinguished—"

"And in a position to marry the woman he loved!" concluded Bobby, smiling.

Then, as Maurice said nothing, but continued to regard him with glowing, anxious eyes, he added—smiling not altogether kindly, this time:

"I think I understand, M. de Saint-Genis."

"And what do you say?" queried the other excitedly.

"Let me make the situation clear first, as I understand it, *monsieur*," continued Clyffurde. "You are, if I mistake not, suggesting that I should hand over the twenty-five millions to you, in order that you should take them yourself to the king in Paris, and by this act not only win his favor, but probably be rewarded with a share of the money which you, presumably, will have forced some unknown highwayman to give up to you. Is that it?"

"It was not money for myself I thought of, sir," murmured Saint-Genis somewhat shamefacedly.

"No, no, of course not," rejoined Clyffurde, with a tone of sarcasm quite foreign to his usual easy-going good nature. "You were thinking of the king's favor, and of a future of distinction and glory."

"I was thinking chiefly of Crystal, sir," said the other haughtily.

"Quite so. You were thinking of winning Mlle. Crystal by a—a subterfuge."

"An innocent one, sir, you will admit. I should not be robbing you in any way. And remember that it is only Crystal's hand that is denied me. Her love I have already won."

A look of pain—quickly suppressed and easily hidden from the other's self-absorbed gaze—crossed the Englishman's earnest face.

"I do remember that, *monsieur*," he said, "else I certainly would never lend a hand in the—subterfuge."

"You will do it, then?" queried the other eagerly.

"I have not said so."

"Ah, but you will!" pleaded Maurice. "Sir,

the eternal gratitude of two faithful hearts would be yours always; for Crystal shall know it all, once we are married, I promise you that. In the midst of her happiness she will find time to bless your generosity and your unselfishness; while I—"

"Enough, I beg of you, M. de Saint-Genis," broke in Clyffurde, with some impatience. "Believe me, I do not hug myself with any thought of my own virtues. Nor do I desire gratitude from you. If I hand over the money to you, it is sorely against my better judgment and distinctly against my duty; but since that duty chiefly lies in being assured that the King of France will receive the money safely, why, by handing it over to you I have that assurance, and my conscience will rest at comparative ease. You shall have the money, sir, and you shall marry Mlle. Crystal, if you can, on the strength of the king's gratitude toward you. Let's say no more about it; for of a truth you and I are playing but a sorry rôle this night."

"A sorry rôle?" protested the other.

"Yes, a sorry rôle. Are you not deceiving a woman? Am I not running counter to my duty?"

"I but deceive Crystal temporarily. I love her, and only deceive in order to win her. The end justifies the means. Nor do you, in my opinion, run counter to your duty—"

But Clyffurde interrupted him roughly.

"I pray you, sir, make no comment on my actions. My own silent comments on them are hard enough to bear; your eulogies would raise bounds to my patience."

Whereupon he walked quickly to the bed, and from under the mattress extricated five leather wallets, which he threw one by one upon the table.

"Here is the king's money," he said curtly. "You could never have taken it from me by force, but I give it over to you willingly. If within a week from now I hear that the king has not received it, I will proclaim you a liar and a thief."

"Sir, you dare—"

"Nay, we'll not quarrel. I don't want to do you any hurt. Take the money, M. de Saint-Genis, and earn not only the king's gratitude, but also Mlle. Crystal's, which is far better worth having. And now, I pray you, leave me to rest. You must be tired, too; and our mutual company has become irksome to us both."

He turned his back on Saint-Genis and sat down at the table. Drawing paper, pen, and inkhorn toward him, with his left hand he

began laboriously to form written characters, as if Saint-Genis's presence or departure no longer concerned him.

An importunate beggar could have been more humiliatingly dismissed, and Saint-Genis flushed to the very roots of his hair. He would have given much to be able to chastise the insolent Englishman then and there; but shame restrained him, and moreover he knew that in a hand-to-hand fight he was no match for the heavy-framed, hard-fisted Clyffurde.

He would not trust himself to speak any more, lest another word might cause both gratitude and prudence to yield to exasperation. Another moment of hesitation, a shrug of the shoulders, perhaps a muttered curse or two, and Saint-Genis picked up the wallets from the table.

Clyffurde never looked up while he did so, but continued to form awkward, illegible characters upon the paper before him, as if his very life depended on being able to write with his left hand.

The next moment Saint-Genis had walked rapidly out of the room. Bobby left off writing and threw down his pen. Resting his elbow upon the table and his head in his hand, he remained silent and motionless while the Frenchman's quick footsteps echoed first along the corridor, then down the creaking stairs, and finally on the floor below. After which there came the sound of the opening and shutting of a door, the dragging of a chair across a wooden floor, and nothing more.

All was still in the house at last. The old clock down-stairs struck half past two.

With a smothered cry of angry contempt, Clyffurde seized the papers that lay scattered on the table and crushed them in his hand with a gesture of passionate wrath. Then he strode up to the window, threw open the rickety casement, and let the pure, cold air of night pour into the room. Perhaps it would dissipate the atmosphere of cowardice, of falsehood, and of selfishness that still seemed to hang there where the Marquis de Saint-Genis had basely bargained for his own ends, and outraged the very name of love, by planning unworthy deeds in its name.

CHAPTER X

VICTORY AND DEFEAT

VICTOR DE MARMONT had spent that same night in wearisome agitation. His mortification and disappointment would not allow him to rest.

He had brought his squad of cavalry up as far as Saint-Priest, which lies a little off the main road, about half-way between Lyons and the scene of De Marmont's discomfiture. Here he and his men spent the night, to start back toward Grenoble early the next morning, seeing that the Comte d'Artois with thirty or forty thousand troops was even now at Lyons.

An hour after leaving Saint-Priest, the little troop came upon a solitary horseman riding a heavy carriage-horse with a postilion's bridle. At first, De Marmont had no other thought save that of malicious pleasure at recognizing the man, whom just now he hated more cordially than any one else in the world. The Marquis de Saint-Genis—for indeed it was he—was peremptorily challenged and questioned, and his impotent anger at the interruption greatly delighted De Marmont.

Victor had an exceedingly disagreeable half-hour to avenge, and to declare Saint-Genis a prisoner of war, to order his removal to Grenoble pending the emperor's pleasure, to command him to be silent when he desired to speak—all this was so much soothing balsam spread upon the wounds which his own pride had suffered at Brestalou last Sunday evening.

It was not until a casual remark from the sergeant under his command caused him to notice the bulging pockets of Saint-Genis's coat that Victor thought to give the order to search the prisoner. The latter entered a vigorous protest. He fought and he threatened. He promised De Marmont the hangman's rope and his men terrible reprisals; but, of course, he was fighting a losing battle.

He was alone against twenty-five enemies. His first attempt to get hold of the pistols in his belt was met with a threat of summary execution. He was dragged out of the saddle, his arms were forced behind his back, and rough hands turned out the precious contents of his pockets. All that he could do was to curse the fate which had brought these pirates on his way, and his own folly in having failed to wait for the armed patrol which undoubtedly would have been sent out to him from Lyons in response to the Comte de Cambray's request.

He had the deadly chagrin and bitter disappointment of seeing the precious papers, which he had wrested from Clyffurde last night at the price of so much humiliation, transferred to the pockets of a real thief and spoliator, who would either keep the money for himself, or—what in the enthusiastic royalist's eyes would be even worse—would place it at the service of the Corsican usurper.

He could hardly believe in the reality of his

ill luck, so appalling was it. In one moment he saw all his hopes fly beyond recall. He had lost Crystal more effectually, more completely than before. If the Englishman ever spoke of what had occurred last night—if Crystal ever knew that he had been fool enough to lose the treasure which had been in his possession for a few hours—her contempt would crush the love which she had for him; nor would the Comte de Cambray ever relent.

De Marmont's triumph, too, was hard to bear. His clumsy irony was terribly galling.

"Would the Marquis de Saint-Genis care to continue his journey to Lyons now? Would he prefer not to go back to Grenoble?"

Saint-Genis bit his tongue and determined to remain silent.

"M. de Saint-Genis is free to go whither he chooses."

The permission was not even welcome. Maurice would as lief be taken prisoner and dragged back to Grenoble as face Crystal with the story of his failure.

Quite mechanically he remounted and pulled his horse to one side. De Marmont ordered his little squad to form once more, and, after a brief word of command and a final sarcastic farewell, galloped off along the road toward Lyons at the head of his men, not waiting to see whether Saint-Genis came his way, too, or not.

With wearied, aching eyes his defeated rival gazed after the fast disappearing troop until they became a mere speck on the long, straight road, and the morning mist finally swallowed them up in the distance. Then he, too, turned his horse's head in the same direction—toward Lyons. Allowing the reins to hang loosely in his hand, and letting his horse pick its own slow way along the road, he gave himself over to the gloominess of his own thoughts.

The Duc d'Orléans, cousin of the king, had just arrived in Lyons to support the Comte d'Artois. Together these two royal princes had framed and posted up a proclamation to the National Guard. The whole city was in a turmoil, for the Duc d'Orléans, who was nothing if not practical, had declared that there was not the slightest chance of a successful defense, and that by far the best thing to do would be to withdraw the troops while they were still loyal.

The Comte d'Artois objected. At any rate, he wouldn't do anything so drastic till after the arrival of Marshal Macdonald, to whom he had sent an urgent courier the day before, enjoining him to come to Lyons without delay.

In the mean while he and his royal cousin did all they could to maintain the loyalty of their troops; but defection was already in the air. Here and there the men had been seen to throw their white cockades into the mud, and more than one cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*" had risen even while the prince himself was reviewing the National Guard on the Place Bellecour.

The bridge of La Guillotière was stoutly barricaded; but as Saint-Genis waited out in the open road, while his name was being taken to the officer in command, he saw crowds of people standing or walking up and down on the opposite bank of the river. They were waiting for the emperor, the news of whose approach was filling the townspeople with excitement and elation.

Heart-sick and wretched, Saint-Genis, after several hours of weary waiting, obtained permission to enter Lyons by the ferry on the south side of the city. Once inside, he had no difficulty in ascertaining where such a distinguished gentleman as the Comte de Cambray had put up for the night, and he promptly made his way to the Hôtel Bourbon.

Monsieur le comte had gone out, the proprietor informed him, but the Duchesse d'Agen was up-stairs with Mlle. de Cambray.

With somewhat uncertain step Saint-Genis followed the hotel-keeper, who had insisted on conducting *monsieur le marquis* to the ladies' apartments. They occupied a suite of rooms on the first floor. The door was opened by Jeanne from within, and Maurice found himself in the presence of Crystal and of the duchess. Of course, he was obliged at once to enter upon the explanation which, with their first cry of surprise, they asked of him.

"Well!" exclaimed Crystal eagerly. "What news?"

"Of the money?" murmured Maurice vaguely. Above all things he was anxious to gain time.

"Yes, the king's money," replied the girl with slight impatience. "Have you tracked the thieves? Do you know where they are? Is there any hope of catching them?"

"None, I am afraid."

Crystal gave a cry of bitter disappointment.

"Then, Maurice," she said reproachfully, "why are you here?"

And the duchess, folding her mittened hands before her, seemed mutely to be asking the same question.

"Did you find the thieves at all?" continued Crystal. "Where did they go with the money? You must surely have found some traces of them. Oh, Maurice," she added

vehemently, "you ought not to have given up your task like this!"

"What could I do?" he murmured. "I was all alone, against so many—"

"You said that you would get on the track of the thieves," she urged, "and father promised to speak with the Comte d'Artois as soon as possible. *Monsieur* assured him that an armed patrol would be sent out to you at once."

"An armed patrol would be no use. I came back on purpose to stop one being sent."

"But why, in Heaven's name?" exclaimed the duchess.

"Because a troop of deserters, with that traitor, Victor de Marmont, is scouring the road, and—"

"We know that," said Crystal. "They stopped us last night, after you left us. They were after the money for the usurper, who had sent them, and I thanked God that twenty-five millions had enriched a common thief rather than the Corsican brigand!"

"Surely, Maurice," said the duchess, with her usual tartness, "you were not fool enough to allow the king's money to fall into that abominable De Marmont's hands?"

"How could I help it?" exclaimed the young man, as if driven to the extremity of despair. "The whole thing was a huge plot, beyond one man's power to cope with. I tracked the thieves," he continued, with vehemence as eager as Crystal's. "I tracked them to a lonely inn off the beaten track—a den of cutthroats and conspirators. I tracked the thief to his lair, and forced him to give the money up to me."

"You forced him? Oh, how splendid!" cried Crystal. "But then—"

"Ah, there was the hideousness of the plot! The thief, feeling himself unmasked, gave up his stolen booty to me. I forced him to his knees, and five wallets containing twenty-five million francs were safely in my pockets."

"You forced him—how splendid!" reiterated Crystal, whose glowing eyes were fixed upon Maurice with all the admiration which she felt.

"Yes, the money was in my pockets for the rest of the happy night; but the abominable thief knew well that his friend, Victor de Marmont, was on the road with twenty or thirty armed deserters in the pay of the Corsican brigand. Hardly had I left the hostelry and found my way back to the main road when I was surrounded, assailed, searched, and robbed. What could I do alone against so many?" continued Saint-Genis, warming to his

own narrative. "The thief and his hirelings I managed successfully, but with the money in my possession I could not risk staying an hour longer in that den of cutthroats. Of course, they were in league with De Marmont, and though I would have guarded the king's money with my life, it was filched from me ere I could draw a weapon in its defense."

He had sunk in a chair, half exhausted with the effort of his own eloquence. With elbows resting on his knees and head buried in his hands, he looked the picture of heroic misery.

Crystal said nothing for a while; there was a deep frown between her eyes.

"Maurice," she said resolutely at last, "you said just now that the thief was in collusion with his friend De Marmont. What did you mean by that?"

"I would rather that you guessed what I meant, Crystal," replied Maurice, without looking up at her.

"You mean—that—" she began slowly.

"That it was Mr. Clyffurde, our English friend," broke in *madame* tartly, "who robbed us on the broad highway. I suspected it all along!"

"You suspected it, *ma tante*, and said nothing?" asked the girl, who had not taken in the full significance of Maurice's hint.

"I said nothing," replied the duchess, "first, because I did not think that I would be doing any good by putting my own surmises into my brother's head, and second, because I must confess that I thought that nice young Englishman had acted *pour le bon motif*."

"How could you think that, *ma tante*?" ejaculated Crystal hotly. "A good motive? To rob us at dead of night—he, a friend of Victor de Marmont—an adherent of the Corsican?"

"Englishmen are not adherents of the Corsican, my dear," retorted *madame* dryly. "Until Maurice's appearance this morning, I was satisfied that the money would ultimately reach his majesty's own hands."

"But we were taking the money to his majesty ourselves!"

"And Victor de Marmont was after it. Mr. Clyffurde may have known that. Remember, my dear," continued the duchess, "that these were my impressions last night. Maurice's account of the den of cutthroats has modified them."

Again Crystal was silent. The frown had darkened on her face; there was a line of bitter resentment round her lips—a look of contempt, of hate, of a desire to hurt, in her eyes.

"Maurice," she said abruptly at last.

"Yes."

"I did wound that thief, did I not?"

"Yes, in the shoulder. It gave me a slight advantage," he said with affected modesty.

"I am glad! And you—you were able to punish him, too, I hope."

"Yes, I punished him."

He was watching her closely, for inwardly he had been wondering how she had taken his news. She was strangely agitated, so Maurice's troubled, jealous heart told him. Her face was flushed, her eyes were wet, and a tiny lace handkerchief which she twisted between her fingers was nothing but a damp rag.

"Oh, I hate him! I hate him!" she murmured, as with an impatient gesture she brushed the gathering tears from her eyes. "Father had been so kind to him—so were we all. How could he?"

"His duty, I suppose," said Saint-Genis magnanimously.

"His duty?" she retorted scornfully.

"To the cause which he served."

"Duty to a usurper, a brigand, the enemy of his country. Was he paid to serve the Corsican, then?"

"Probably."

"His being in trade—buying gloves at Grenoble—was all a plant, then?"

"I am afraid so," said Saint-Genis, who was sinking deeper and deeper in the quagmire of cowardly lies into which he had allowed himself to drift.

"And he was nothing better than a spy!"

No one, not even Crystal herself, could have defined with what feelings she said this. Was it solely contempt, or did a strange mixture of regret and sorrow mingle with the scorn which she felt?

Swiftly her thoughts had flown back to that Sunday evening, a very few days ago, when the course of her destiny was so suddenly changed, when her marriage with a man whom she could never love was broken off, when there rose upon the horizon of her life the prospect of a renewed existence of poverty and exile in the wake of a dispossessed king.

That same evening a man whom she had hardly noticed before—a man neither of her own nationality nor of her own caste—had entered into her life. Clyffurde had come to her with a few words of intense sympathy and a genuine offer of friendship. She had felt cheered and warmed by his words, and a strange and sweet sense of security against hurt and sorrow had entered her heart as she listened to them.

And now she knew that all that was false—false his sympathy, false his offers of friendship—his words were false, his hand-clasp false. Treachery lurked behind that kindly look in his eyes, and falsehood beneath his smile.

"He was nothing better than a spy!"

The sting of that thought hurt her more than she could have believed possible. She had so few real friends, and this one had proved a sham. Had she been alone, she would have given way to tears; but before Maurice, or even her aunt, she was ashamed of her grief, ashamed of her feelings and of her thoughts.

There was a great deal yet that she wished to know, but somehow the words choked her when she wanted to ask further questions. Fortunately the duchess was taking Maurice thoroughly to task. She asked innumerable questions, and would not spare him the narration of a single detail.

"Tell us all about it from the beginning, Maurice," she said. "Where did you first meet the rogue?"

And Maurice, weary and ashamed, was forced to embark on a minute account of adventures that were imaginary from beginning to end. He had stumbled across the wayside hostelry on a lonely by-path; he had found it full of cutthroats; he had stalked and waylaid their chief in his own room, and forced him to give up the money by the weight of his fists.

It was a paltry and pitiable fiction, but Saint-Genis, as he warmed to his tale, lost the shame of it. Only wrath remained with him—anger that he should be forced into this despicable rôle through the intrigues of a rival.

In his heart he was already beginning to find innumerable excuses for his cowardice. His rage and hatred grew against Clyffurde as *madame's* more and more persistent questions taxed his imagination almost to exhaustion.

When she at last granted him a respite after half an hour of this wearying cross-examination, he made pretext of urgent business at the headquarters of the Comte d'Artois, and took his leave of the ladies. He hoped that the duchess's tact would induce her to leave him alone for a moment with Crystal; but *madame* stuck obstinately to her chair, and was blind and deaf to every hint from him. Crystal, who was singularly absorbed, and had lent but a very indifferent ear to his narrative, made no attempt to detain him.

She gave him her hand to kiss, just as *madame* had done; it lay hot and moist in his.

"Crystal," he continued to murmur, as his lips touched her fingers, "I love you—I worked for you—it is not my fault that I failed."

She looked at him kindly and sympathetically through her tears, and gave his hand a gentle little pressure.

"I am sure it was not your fault," she replied gently. "Poor Maurice!"

It was no more than any kind friend would say under like circumstances, but to a lover every little word from his beloved has a significance of its own, every look from her has its hidden meaning. Somewhat satisfied and cheered, Maurice now took his final leave.

"Does *monsieur le comte* propose to continue his journey to Paris?" he asked at the last.

"Oh, yes," Crystal replied. "He could not stay away while he feels that his majesty may have need of him. Oh, Maurice!" she added, suddenly forgetting her absorption, her wrath against Clyffurde, her own disappointment—everything in face of the threatened calamity. "You don't think, do you, that that abominable usurper will succeed in ousting the king once more from his throne?"

And Saint-Genis—remembering Laffray and Grenoble, remembering what was going on in Lyons at this moment, the silent grumblings of the troops, the defaced white cockades, the cries of "*Vive l'empereur!*" which he himself had heard as he rode through the town—Saint-Genis, remembering all this, could only shake his head and shrug his shoulders in miserable doubt.

When he had gone, Crystal's thoughts veered back once more to Clyffurde and his treachery.

"What abominable deceit, *ma tante!*" she cried, and quite against her will tears of wrath and disappointment rose to her eyes. "What villainy! What odious, execrable treachery!"

Madame shrugged her shoulders and took up her knitting.

"These days, my dear," she said with unwonted placidity, "the world is so full of treachery that men and women absorb it at every pore."

"But I shall not leave it at that," rejoined Crystal resolutely. "I'll find a means of punishing that vile traitor! I'll make him feel the hatred which he has so richly deserved. I shall not rest till I have made him suffer as he makes me suffer now!"

"My dear, my dear!" protested the duchess, a little shocked at the girl's vehemence.

Indeed, Crystal's otherwise sweet, gentle, yielding personality seemed completely transformed. For the moment she was a sensitive

woman who has been hit and hurt, and whose desire for retaliation is keener, more relentless than that of a man.

"The dear child!" sighed the duchess over her knitting. "It is the English blood in her. Those people never know how to accept the inevitable. They are always wanting to fight some one for something, and never know when they are beaten!"

CHAPTER XI

THE ASCENT OF THE CAPITOL

THE triumphal march from the Gulf of Juan continued uninterrupted to Paris.

After Laffray and Grenoble, Lyons, where the silk-weavers of La Guillotière assembled in their thousands to demolish the barricades which had been built on their bridge against the arrival of the emperor. They watched his entry into their city waving kerchiefs and hats in his honor, and tricolor flags and cockades fished out of cupboards where they had lain hidden, but not forgotten, for a whole year.

After Lyons, Villefranche, where sixty thousand peasants and workmen awaited his arrival at the foot of the tree of liberty, on the top of which a brass eagle, the relic of some old standard, glistened like gold as it caught the rays of the setting sun.

Then Nevers, where the townsfolk urged the regiments, as they marched through the city, to tear the white cockades from their hats; and Chalons-sur-Saône, where the work-people seized a convoy of artillery intended for the army of the Comte d'Artois. The *préfets* of the departments, the bureaucracy of provinces and cities, were not only amazed but struck with terror.

"This is a new revolution!" they cried in dismay.

Yes, it is a new revolution—the revolt of the peasantry, of the poor, the humble, the oppressed! The hatred which they felt against that old régime which had come back to them with its old arrogance and its former tyrannies had combined with the army's loyalty to the emperor who had led it to glory, to fortune, and to fame.

The people and the army were roused by the same enthusiasm, and marched shoulder to shoulder to join the standard of Napoleon—the little man in the shabby hat and the gray redingote, who for them personified the spirit of the great revolution, the great struggle for liberty and its final victory.

The army of the Comte d'Artois—that por-

tion of it which remained loyal—was powerless against the overwhelming tide of popular enthusiasm, powerless against dissatisfaction, mutterings, and constant defections in its ranks. It might have been different in Provence, for Provence was royalist, man, woman, and child; but Napoleon took the route of the Alps, and avoided Provence. By the time he reached Lyons he had an army of his own, and the Comte d'Artois, fearing more defections and worse defeats, had thought it prudent to retire.

It has often been said that if a single shot had been fired against his original little band, Napoleon's march on Paris would have been stopped. Who shall tell? There are such "ifs" in the world, which no human mind can challenge. Certain it is that that shot was not fired. At Laffray, Delessart gave the order, but he did not unsheathe his sword, except to offer it to Napoleon. On the walls of Grenoble, Saint-Genis, in command of the artillery and urged by the Comte de Cambray, did not dare to give the order, or to fire a gun himself.

And at Lyons there was not a militiaman, a royalist volunteer, or a pariah out of the streets, who was willing to fire that first shot. Marshal Macdonald had sworn that he would do it himself, but his determination failed him at the last, when he found himself face to face with the conqueror of Austerlitz and Jena and Rivoli and a thousand other glorious fights. It was this little man in the gray redingote who had created him marshal of France and Duke of Tarentum on the battle-fields of Lombardy. They had been comrades in arms, had shared their scanty army rations, and had slept beside each other round the bivouac fires. How could Macdonald refuse to join in the cry that resounded from end to end of Lyons:

"*Vive l'empereur!*"

Victor de Marmont did not wait for Napoleon's arrival at Lyons; nor did he attempt to enter the city. He knew that there was still some money in the imperial treasury, brought over from Elba. His mind, always in search of the dramatic, had dwelt with pleasure on thoughts of the day when the emperor, having entered Fontainebleau, or perhaps even Paris and the Tuileries, would be met by his faithful De Marmont. There, on bended knees, in the midst of a brilliant and admiring throng, he would present to his grateful chief the twenty-five million francs originally the property of the empress herself, and now happily wrested from the cupidity of royalist traitors.

The picture pleased De Marmont's fancy.

He knew that no one requited a service more amply and more generously than Napoleon. Title, riches, honors, anything he wanted would speedily become his, and with these to his credit he could claim Crystal de Cambray once more.

Oh, she would be humbled again by then, she and her father, too, the proud aristocrats! They would be doomed once more to penury and exile, unless De Marmont came forth like the fairy prince to the beggar maid, his hands laden with riches, ready to lay these at the feet of the woman he loved.

These were pleasing thoughts which kept Victor de Marmont company on his way between Lyons and Fontainebleau. Once past Villefranche, he sent most of his escort back to Lyons, where the emperor should have arrived by this time. He had written out a superficial report of his expedition, which the sergeant in charge of the little troop was to convey to Napoleon's own hands. He kept only two men with him, and put himself and them into plain traveling clothes, which he purchased at Villefranche.

He continued his journey to the north without much haste. The roads were safe enough from footpads, he and his two men were well armed, and what stragglers from the main royalist army he came across would be far too busy with their own retreat to pay much heed to a seemingly harmless civilian traveler.

De Marmont loved to linger on the way in the towns and hamlets where the news of the emperor's approach had already been wafted—on the wings of the wind or of the birds, who shall say? Enough that it had come, that the peasants, assembled in masses in their villages, were whispering together that he was coming—the little man in the gray redingote—*l'empereur!*

De Marmont would stop to whisper with the peasants. Yes, he was coming, and the whole of France was giving him a rousing welcome! At Laffray, at Grenoble, at Lyons, the army had rallied to his standard as one man!

After Nevers, Victor was only twenty-four hours ahead of Napoleon, and his progress became a triumphant one. Newspapers, despatches, had filtered through from Paris; news became authentic, though some of it sounded a little wild. Wherever De Marmont arrived he was received with acclamations as the man who had seen the emperor, who had assisted at the emperor's magnificent entry into Grenoble, who could assure citizens and peasantry that it was all true. He could tell them that the emperor would be in Paris again very

shortly, and that once more there would be an end to tyranny and oppression, to the rule of incompetent and fatuous princes.

He did not halt at Fontainebleau, for now he knew that the court of the Tuileries was in a panic, that neither the Comte d'Artois, nor the Duc de Berry, nor any of the royal princes had succeeded in keeping the army together. Defections had been rife for the past week, even before Napoleon had shown himself; and Marshal Ney, the bravest soldier in France, had joined his emperor at Auxerre.

No, De Marmont would not halt at Fontainebleau. It was Paris that he wanted to see! Paris, which to-day would witness the hasty flight of the gouty king whom it had never learned to love! Paris, decking herself out like a bride for the arrival of her bridegroom! Paris, waiting and watching while once again on the Tuileries and the Hôtel de Ville, on the Louvre and the Luxembourg, on church towers and government buildings, the old tricolor flag waved gaily in the wind.

He slept that night at a small hotel in the Louvre quarter; but the whole evening he spent on the Place du Carrousel, with the great gathering outside the Tuileries, watching the king's departure from the palace. In spite of its political bias, the crowd was silent and deeply moved. The spectacle before it was pitiable in the extreme—an old, ailing monarch, driven forth from the home of his ancestors, and forced, after an exile of twenty-three years and a brief reign of less than one, to go back once more to misery and banishment.

It was late on the following evening—March 20, 1815. A thin mist was spreading over Paris from the river, and from the Place du Carrousel the lighted windows of the Tuileries appeared like dimly flickering stars.

Here an immense crowd was assembled. It had waited patiently hour after hour, ever since a courier came over from Fontainebleau early in the afternoon, with the news that the emperor was already there and would be in Paris that night.

It was the same crowd which twenty-four hours before had shed a tear or two in sympathy for the departing monarch. Now it stood here—waiting, excited, ready to cheer the return of the national hero. It was a heterogeneous crowd, made up in part of the curious, the idle, the indifferent; and in part, too, of the Bonapartist enthusiasts and malcontents who had groaned under the tyranny of the Restoration. Here and there, no doubt, were hot-headed revolutionaries, cursing the return

of the emperor as heartily as they had cursed that of the Bourbon king; and here and there a few heart-sick royalists come to watch the final annihilation of their hopes.

Victor de Marmont, wrapped in a dark cloak, stood among the crowd for a while. He knew that the emperor was not likely to be in Paris before night, but he loved to be in the very midst of the wave of enthusiasm, which was surging higher and ever higher, and to share the exaltation of this mass of men and women, assembled to acclaim the hero whom he himself adored. Closely buttoned inside his coat he had scraps of paper worth the ransom of any king.

Among the crowd, too, Bobby Clyffurde moved and stood. He was one of those who watched its enthusiasm with a heart full of forebodings. He knew well how short Napoleon's day of triumph was likely to be. He knew that within a few weeks the bold and reckless adventurer who had so easily reconquered France would realize that the imperial crown would never be allowed to sit firmly upon his head.

In his pocket Clyffurde had a letter which he had received at his lodgings in the Alma quarter only a few moments before he sallied forth into the streets. It was in answer to a confidential inquiry of his own sent to the chief of the British Intelligence Department in Paris, desiring to know if the department had any knowledge of a large sum of money having come unexpectedly into the hands of the King of France, shortly before his flight.

The answer was that the Intelligence Department knew of no such windfall; but its agents reported that Victor de Marmont, captain of the usurper's body-guard, had waylaid the Marquis de Saint-Genis on the highroad not far from Lyons. The escort which had accompanied Victor de Marmont on that occasion had been dismissed by him at Villefranche, and the information came through the indiscretion of the sergeant in charge of the escort, who had boasted in a tavern at Lyons that he had actually searched M. de Saint-Genis, and had found upon him a large sum of money, of which M. de Marmont promptly took possession.

When Clyffurde received this letter, and mastered its contents, he cursed Saint-Genis's stupidity in allowing himself to be caught, but still more emphatically did he curse himself for the soft-heartedness that prompted him to part with the money.

The letter which brought him the bad news seemed to scorch his hand and brand it with

the mark of folly. He had thought to serve the woman he loved—first, by taking the money from her, since he knew that otherwise Victor de Marmont would seize it; and, second, by allowing the man whom she loved to have the honor and glory of laying the money at his sovereign's feet. The whole thing had ended in a miserable fiasco, and Clyffurde felt sore and wrathful against himself.

In that same crowd before the Tuileries—among those who came, heart-sick, hopeless, forlorn, to watch the triumph of the enemy, as they had watched the humiliation of their feeble king—was the Comte de Cambray, with his daughter Crystal on his arm.

They had come, as other royalists came, with a vague hope that in the attitude of the crowd they would discern indifference rather than exultation, and that the active agents of their party, as well as those of England and Prussia, would succeed presently in stirring up a counter demonstration. They had hoped that a few cries of "*Vive le roi!*" would prove to the army and to the people of Paris that acclamations for the usurper were at any rate not unanimous.

But the crowd was not indifferent—it was excited. When first the Comte de Cambray and Crystal arrived on the Place du Carrousel, a number of white cockades could be picked out in the throng, worn on a hat or fixed to a buttonhole; but as the afternoon wore on, there were fewer and fewer of the small white stars to be seen. The temper of the crowd did not brook this mute reproach upon its enthusiasm. One or two cockades had been roughly torn and thrown into the mud, and the wearer unpleasantly ill-used if he persisted in any royalistic demonstration.

Crystal, when she saw these incidents, was not the least frightened. She wore her white cockade openly pinned to her cloak. She was far too loyal, far too enthusiastic and fearless, far too much a woman, to yield her convictions to the popular feeling of the moment. She looked so young and so pretty, clinging to her father's arm, and he seemed so picturesque and harmless a representative of the fallen régime, that except for a few rough words, a threat here and there, they had so far escaped active molestation.

Presently the crowd had so much to see that it ceased to look out for white cockades, or to bait the sad-eyed royalists. A procession of carriages—sparse, at first, and simple in appearance—had begun to make its way from different parts of the town across the Place du Carrousel toward the Tuileries. They drew

up before the gates of the Pavillon de Flore with as little show as might be. The carriage doors were opened unostentatiously, and dark, furtive figures stepped out from them and almost ran to the door of the palace, so eager were they to escape observation. Their cloaks were wrapped closely round them to hide the court dress or uniform below.

Ministers, dignitaries of the court, counselors of state; majordomos, stewards, butlers, body-servants—they all came one by one or in groups of twos and threes. As the afternoon wore on, these arrivals grew less and less furtive. The carriages arrived with greater clatter and to-do, with finer liveries and more gorgeous harness. Those who stepped out of the carriage doors were no longer quick and stealthy in their movements. They lingered near the step to give an order or to chat with a friend. The big cloak no longer concealed the gorgeous uniform below; it was allowed to fall away from the shoulder, so as to display the row of medals and stars, the gold embroidery, the magnificence of court attire.

The emperor had left Fontainebleau! Within an hour he would be in Paris! Every one knew it, and the excitement in the crowd that watched grew more and more intense. Last night these same people had looked with mute if superficial sympathy on the departure of Louis XVIII through these same palace gates; but the crowd of to-day has already forgotten the fugitive king. Men, women, and children talk and chatter, they scream with astonishment and delight, as from more and more carriages more and more gorgeously dressed folk descend. The ladies are beginning to arrive—the wives of the great court dignitaries, the ladies of the court and household of the absent empress. They do not attempt to hide their brilliant toilets; their bare shoulders and arms gleam through the fastenings of their cloaks, and diamonds sparkle in their hair.

The crowd has recognized some of the great marshals, the men who in the emperor's wake led the French troops to victory in Italy, in Prussia, in Austria. Maret, Duc de Bassano is there, and the crowd cheers him. Others are the Duc de Rovigo; Marshal Davout, Prince d'Eckmühl; General Exelmans, one of Napoleon's oldest companions in arms; the Duke of Gaeta, the Duke of Padua, a veritable crowd of generals and superior officers.

It seems like the world of the sleeping beauty and of the enchanted castle, which a kiss has wakened from its eleven months' slumber. The empire had only been asleep, it had dreamed a bad dream, wherein its hero was a

prisoner and an exile. Now it is suddenly wakening back to life and to reality.

The night wears on; darkness and fog envelop Paris more and more. Excitement becomes akin to anxiety. If the emperor did leave Fontainebleau when the last courier said that he did, he should certainly be here by now. There are strange whispers, strange waves of evil reports that spread through the waiting crowd. A royalist fanatic had shot at the emperor—the emperor was wounded—he was dead!

Oh, the excitement of that interminable wait!

At last, just as from every church tower the bells strike the hour of nine, there comes the muffled sound of a distant cavalcade—the sound of horses galloping, only half-drowning that of the rumbling of coach-wheels. It comes from the direction of the embankment, and from far away now is heard the first cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*"

The noise gets louder and more clear, the cries are repeated again and again till they merge into one great, uproarious clamor. Like the ocean when lashed by the wind, the crowd surges, moves, rises on tiptoe, subsides, falls back, to crush forward again and once more to retreat as a heavy coach escorted by a thousand or so of mounted men dashes over the cobbles of the Place du Carrousel. Now the cries of the crowd become positively deafening:

"*Vive l'empereur!*"

The officers in the courtyard of the palace rush to the coach as it draws up at the Pavillon de Flore. One of them succeeds in opening the carriage door. The emperor is literally torn out of the carriage and borne to the vestibule, where more officers seize him, raise him from the crowd, bear him along, hoisted upon their shoulders, up the monumental staircase.

Their enthusiasm is akin to delirium. They nearly tear their hero to pieces in their wild, mad, frantic welcome.

"In Heaven's name, protect his person!" exclaims the Duc de Vicence anxiously.

He and Lavalette manage to get hold of the banisters, and by dint of fighting and pushing succeed in walking backward, step by step, in front of the emperor, thus making a way for him.

Lavalette can hardly believe his eyes, and the Duc de Vicence keeps murmuring:

"It is the emperor! It is the emperor!"

And he—the little, stout man in green cloth coat and white breeches—walks up the steps

of his reconquered palace, like a man in a dream. His eyes seem to be set on nothing; he makes no movement to keep his too-enthusiastic friends away; the smile upon his lips is meaningless and fixed.

"*Vive l'empereur!*" vociferates the crowd.

Vive l'empereur for one hundred days—a few weeks of joy, a few weeks of anxiety, a few weeks of indecision and of doubt; then defeat more irrevocable than before, exile more distant, despair more complete.

Vive l'empereur, while we shout with excitement, while we remember the disappointments of the past year, while we vainly hope for better things from a hand that has lost its cunning, a mind that has lost its power.

Vive l'empereur! Let him live for a hundred days, while we forget our enthusiasm and Europe prepares its final crushing blow. Let him live until we remember once again the horrors of war, the misery, the famine, the devastated homes; until once more we see the maimed and crippled crawling back wearily from the fields of glory, until our ears ring with the wails of widows and the cries of the fatherless.

Then let him live no longer, for he it is who has brought this misery on us through his will and through his ambition, and France has suffered so much from the aftermath of glory that all she wants now is rest.

Gradually—but it took some hours—the tumult and excitement in and round the Tuileries subsided. The emperor managed to shut himself up in his study and to eat some supper in peace, while outside his windows the crowd, which had nothing more to see, and was getting tired of staring up at glittering panes of glass, went more or less quietly homeward.

Only in the courtyard of the Tuileries, the troopers who had formed the emperor's escort from Fontainebleau tethered their horses to the railings, rolled themselves in their mantles, and slept on the pavements. It was like a bivouac in a place which has been taken by storm.

One of the last to leave the Place du Carrousel was Bobby Clyffurde. The crowd was thin by this time, but it was the tired and the indifferent, the merely curious, who had been the first to go. Those who remained to the last were either the very enthusiastic, who wanted to set up a final shout of "*Vive l'empereur!*" after their idol had entirely disappeared from their view, or the malcontents who would not lose a moment to discuss their grievances, to murmur covert threats, or to suggest revolt in some shape or form.

Bobby slipped quickly past several of these isolated groups, indifferent to the dark and glowering looks of suspicion that were cast at him, as if his tall, muscular figure with the firm step and the defiant walk was vaguely reminiscent of the British troops that had been in Paris last year at the time of the foreign occupation. He had skirted the Tuileries gardens, and was walking along the embankment, which now was dark and solitary save for some rowdy enthusiasts on ahead who, arm in arm in two long rows that reached from the garden railings to the parapet, were shouting themselves hoarse with "*Vive l'empereur!*"

Clyffurde was deliberating whether he would turn back and go home some other way, or charge this unpleasant obstruction from the rear and risk the consequences, when he noticed two figures still farther on ahead, walking in the same direction.

One of the two figures, thus viewed in the distance, through the mist and from the back, looked nevertheless like that of a woman. This fact at once decided Bobby as to what he would do next. He sprinted toward the crowd as fast as he could; but unfortunately he did not come up with them in time to prevent the two unfortunate pedestrians being surrounded by the turbulent throng. Still arm in arm, and to the accompaniment of wild shouts, the rowdies had formed a ring round them, and were vociferating at the top of raucous voices:

"*À bas la cocarde blanche! À bas! Vive l'empereur!*"

A flickering street-lamp feebly lit up the scene. Bobby dimly saw a man and a woman standing boldly in the midst of the hostile crowd, while two white cockades gleamed defiantly against the dark background of their cloaks. The crowd was noisy, and was ready for mischief, but Clyffurde's swift and scientific onslaught from the rear staggered and disconcerted the swaggering bullies. There ensued a good deal more shouting, plenty of cursing; the Englishman's arms and legs seemed to be flying in every direction like the arms of a windmill; a good many thuds and bumps, a few groans, a renewal of the attack, more thuds and groans, and the discomfited group of roisterers fled in every direction.

Clyffurde, with a smile, turned to the two motionless figures whom he had so opportunely rescued from an unpleasant plight.

"Just a few turbulent blackguards," he said lightly, as he made a quick attempt at readjusting the set of his coat and the position of his satin stock. "There was not much fight in them really, and—"

He had, of course, lost his hat in the brief if somewhat stormy encounter; and now, as he turned, the thin streak of light from the street-lamp fell full upon his face with its twinkling, deep-set eyes, and the half-humorous, self-deprecatory curl of the firm mouth.

A simultaneous exclamation came from his two protégés, and stopped the easy flow of his light-hearted words. He peered closely into the gloom, and it was his turn now to exclaim, half doubting, wholly astonished:

"Mlle. Crystal! *Monsieur le comte!*"

"Indeed, sir," broke in the count slowly, and with a voice that seemed to be trembling with emotion, "it is to my daughter and to myself that you have just rendered a signal and generous service. For this I tender you my thanks; yet believe me, I pray you, when I say that both she and I would rather have suffered any humiliation or ill-usage from that rough crowd than owe our safety and comfort to you."

There was so much contempt, and even hatred, in the voice of this old man, whose manner was habitually a pattern of moderation and of dignity, that for the moment Clyffurde was completely taken aback. Astonishment fought with resentment, and with the maddening sense that in any case he was impotent to avenge even so bitter an insult as had just been hurled upon him, against a man of the count's years and status.

"*Monsieur le comte,*" he said at last, "will you let me remind you that the other day, when you turned me out of your house like a dishonest servant, you would not allow me to say a single word in my own justification? The man on whose word you condemned me without a hearing is a scatter-brained braggart who, as you yourself must know, is not to be trusted, and—"

"Pardon me, *monsieur,*" broke in the count; "but even if I acted on that evening with undue haste and ill-considered judgment, many things have happened since which you surely would not wish to discuss with me just when you have rendered me a signal service."

"Your pardon, *monsieur le comte,*" retorted Clyffurde with equal coolness. "I know of nothing which could possibly justify the charges which not later than last Sunday you laid at my door."

"The charge which I laid at your door then, Mr. Clyffurde, has not been lifted from its threshold yet. I charged you with deliberately conspiring against my king and my country all the while that you were eating bread and salt at my table. I charged you with striving

to render assistance to that Corsican usurper, whom may the great God punish! You yourself practically owned to this before you left my house."

"That I did not, *monsieur le comte,*" returned Clyffurde hotly. "As a man of honor, I give you my word that except for my being in De Marmont's company on the day that he posted up the emperor's proclamation in Grenoble, I had no hand in any political scheme."

"And you would have me believe you," exclaimed the count, "when you talk of that Corsican brigand as the emperor! Those words, sir, are an insult, and had you not saved my daughter and me just now from violence, I would, old as I am, strike you in the face for them!"

With an impatient sigh at the old man's hot-headed obstinacy, Clyffurde turned with a look of appeal to Crystal, who had taken no part in the discussion.

"*Mademoiselle,*" he said gently, "will you not at least do me justice? Cannot you see that I am clumsy at defending my own honor, seeing that I have never had to do it before?"

"I only see, *monsieur,*" she retorted coldly, "that you are making vain and pitiable efforts to regain my father's regard, no doubt for purposes of your own. But why should you trouble? You have nothing more to gain from us. Your clever comedy of a highwayman on the road has succeeded beyond your expectations. Now that the Corsican sits on the throne lately vacated by an infirm monarch whom you and yours helped to dethrone, no doubt he will reward you for your pains. As for me, I can only echo my father's feelings. I would ten thousand times sooner have been torn to pieces by a rough crowd of ignorant folk than owe my safety to your interference!"

She took her father's arm and made a movement to go. Instinctively Clyffurde tried to stop her. The injustice of her accusation maddened him, but the bitter resentment in the tone of her voice, the look of passionate hatred with which she regarded him as she spoke, positively appalled him.

"*Monsieur le comte,*" he said firmly, "I cannot let you go like this, while such horrible thoughts of me exist in your mind. England gave you shelter for more than twenty years; in the name of my country's kindness and hospitality toward you, I, as one of her sons, demand that you tell me frankly just what I am supposed to have done to justify this extraordinary hatred and contempt which you and Mlle. Crystal seem to have for me."

"One of England's sons, *monsieur!*" retorted the count. "Nay, you are not even that. England stands for right and for justice, for our legitimate king and the punishment of the usurper."

"Great Heaven!" Clyffurde exclaimed, more and more bewildered. "Are you accusing me of treachery to my own country? This will I allow no man to do, not even—"

"Then, sir, I pray you," rejoined Crystal proudly, "go and seek a quarrel with the man who has unmasked you; who caught you red-handed with the money in your possession which you had stolen from us; who forced you to give up what you had stolen; and whom you and your friend Victor de Marmont waylaid and robbed once more. Go then, Mr. Clyffurde, and seek a quarrel with the Marquis de Saint-Genis, who has already struck you in the face once and no doubt will be ready to do so again!"

What of Clyffurde's thoughts while the woman whom he loved with all the strength of his lonely heart poured forth these hideous insults? Amazement, then wrath, bewilderment, then final hopelessness—all these sensations ran riot through his brain.

He gathered that Saint-Genis had behaved like an abominable blackguard. He had lied like a coward, and betrayed the man who had rendered him an infinitely great service. Of him Clyffurde wouldn't even think! Some day, perhaps, he might be able to punish him; but not now—not while this poor, forlorn, heart-sick girl pinned her implicit faith upon that wretched worm, and bestowed on him the priceless guerdon of her love.

An infinity of pity for Mlle. Crystal rose in his kindly heart and obscured every other emotion. That same pity he had felt for her before—a sweet, protecting pity, gentle sister to fiercer, madder love, which had perhaps never been so strong as it was at this hour, when for the second time he was about to make a supreme sacrifice for her.

That the sacrifice must be made, he knew even when first Saint-Genis's name escaped her lips. She loved Saint-Genis, she believed in him, and Clyffurde, who loved her with every fiber of his being, with all the passionate ardor of his heart, could serve her no better than by accepting this awful humiliation which she put upon him. If he could have justified himself now, he would not have done it—not while she loved Saint-Genis, and he himself was less than nothing to her.

"One moment, *mademoiselle,*" he said. "Before you go, will you tell me one thing, at

least? Was it M. de Saint-Genis himself who accused me of treachery?"

"There is no reason why I should deny it, sir," she replied coldly. "It was M. de Saint-Genis himself who gave to my father and to me a full account of the interview which he had with you at a lonely inn, some few kilometers from Lyons, and less than two hours after we had been shamefully robbed, on the highroad, of money that belonged to the king."

"And did M. de Saint-Genis tell you, *mademoiselle* that I purposed to use that money for my own ends?"

"Or for those of the Corsican," she retorted impatiently; "I care not which. Yes, sir, M. de Saint-Genis told me that with his own lips; and when I had heard the whole miserable story of your duplicity and your treachery, I hoped that I might some day be able to inflict upon you an equally grievous injury, to avenge the wrong that you had done not only to the King of France but to me and to my father. I perhaps owe my father's life to your timely intervention to-night, and for this I must be grateful, but—"

Her voice broke in a kind of passionate sob, and it took her a moment or two to recover herself. Clyffurde stood mute, with well-nigh broken heart, his very soul so filled with sorrow for her that there was no room in it even for resentment.

"Father, let us go now," Crystal said after a while. "No purpose can be served by further recriminations."

"None, my dear," said the count, in his usual polished manner. "Personally I have felt all along that explanations could but aggravate the unpleasantness of the present position. Mr. Clyffurde understands perfectly, I am sure. He had his ax to grind—whether personal or political we really do not care to know, and we are not likely ever to meet again. All we can do now is to thank him for his timely intervention on our behalf, and—"

"And brand him a liar!" broke in Clyffurde, with bitter vehemence.

"Your pardon, *monsieur,*" returned the count coldly, "neither my daughter nor I have done that. It is your deeds that condemn you, your own admissions, and the word of M. de Saint-Genis. Would you perchance suggest that he lied?"

"Oh, no!" rejoined Clyffurde. "It is I who lied, of course!"

He said this very slowly, and as if speaking with mature deliberation; not raising his voice, nor yet allowing it to quiver from any stress of latent emotion. And yet there was some-

thing in the tone of it, something in the man's attitude, which suggested such a depth of passion that, quite instinctively, the count remained silent and awed.

For the moment, however, Clyffurde seemed to have forgotten the older man's presence. Wounded in every fiber of his being by the woman whom he loved so devotedly, he had spoken only to her, compelling her attention and stirring, even by this simple admission of a despicable crime, an emotion in her which she could not define.

She turned inquiring eyes on him, into which she tried to throw all that she felt of hatred and contempt. She had meant to wound him, and it seemed, indeed, as if she had succeeded beyond her dearest wish. By the faint light of the street-lamp his face looked haggard and old. The traitor was suffering almost as much as he deserved, almost as much, Crystal said obstinately to herself, as she had wished him to do. And yet, at sight of him now, she felt a strong, unconquerable pity for him—the womanly instinct, no doubt, to heal rather than to hurt.

But this pity she was not prepared to show him. She preferred to pass out of his life, to forget once and for all that sense of warmth of the soul, of comfort and of peace, which she had felt in his presence on that memorable evening at Brestalou. Above all, she wished never to touch his hand again—the hand which seemed to have such power to protect and to shield her, when on that same evening she had placed her own in it.

Therefore she took her father's arm once more; she turned resolutely away without another word. Clyffurde stood there in the lonely, silent street until the mist and gloom swallowed up the two retreating figures as in an elfish grave. Then, mechanically, he hunted for his hat and walked away in the other direction.

That was the end of his life's romance, of course! The woman he loved had gone out of his life forever. She had turned away from him as she would from a venomous snake. Clyffurde was left in utter loneliness, with only a vague, foolish longing in his heart—the longing that one day she might have her wish, and might have the power to inflict upon him some deadly injury—to wound him bodily as she had wounded him to the depth of his soul to-night.

For the rest, there was nothing more for him to do in France. King Louis was not likely to remain at Lille very long. Within twenty-four hours, probably, he would continue his journey

—his flight—to Ghent, where once more he would hold his court in exile, with the fugitive royalists rallied around his tottering throne.

Clyffurde had already received orders from his chief at the Intelligence Department to report at Lille, and then, if the king and court had already left, at Ghent. If, however, there were plenty of men to do the work of the department, it was his intention to go back to England as soon as possible, and seek a commission in the new army. England would be wanting soldiers more urgently than she had ever done before. His mother and sisters, for whose sake he had gone into business, were sufficiently provided for. They no longer needed a bread winner, but England wanted all her sons, for she would surely fight.

Clyffurde, who had seen the English papers brought over by an intelligence courier that morning, realized that the debates in Parliament could only end one way. England would not tolerate Bonaparte; she would not even consent to his abdication in favor of his own son. Austria had already declared her intention of renewing the conflict, and so had Prussia.

The man whom the people of France loved, and whom his army idolized, was the disturber of the peace of Europe. No one would trust his protestations of pacific intentions. He had caused too much devastation, too much misery in the past; who would believe in him for the future?

For the memory of the past, and for dread of the future, he must go—go to a place whence he could not again return. Remembering Grenoble, remembering Lyons, Villefranche, and Nevers, Clyffurde could not altogether suppress a sigh of regret for the brave man, the wonderful genius, the reckless adventurer who had so boldly scaled for the second time the heights of the Capitol, oblivious of the fact that the Tarpeian Rock was dangerously near.

At this same hour, when Clyffurde finally bade adieu to the vague hopes of happiness which his love for Crystal de Cambray had engendered in his heart, his whilom companion, now his rival and enemy, Victor de Marmont, was laying a tribute of twenty-five million francs at the feet of the emperor.

"What reward shall we give you for this service?" the emperor had deigned to ask.

"The means to subdue a woman's pride, sire, and to make her thankful to marry me," replied De Marmont promptly.

"A title, eh?" queried the emperor. "You

have everything else, you rogue, to please a woman's fancy and make her thankful to marry you."

"A title, sire, would be a welcome addition," said De Marmont lightly; "and I humbly ask for freedom to go and woo her, until France and my emperor need me again."

"Then go and do your wooing, man, and come back here to me in three months, for I doubt not that by then the flames of war will have been kindled against me again."

CHAPTER XII

THE SOUND OF REVELRY BY NIGHT

THE clever hand had lost its cunning, the mighty brain its indomitable will-power. Genius was still there, but it was cramped by indecision—the indecision born of a sense of enmity, suspicion, and treachery where there should have been nothing but enthusiasm and the blind devotion of the past.

Napoleon had reconquered France by the force of his personality and of his prestige, had been acclaimed from the Gulf of Juan to the gates of the Tuileries as the savior of the country, the people's emperor, the beloved of the nation returned from exile. On the 20th of March he had said with his old vigor and his old pride:

"Failure is the nightmare of the feeble! Impotence, the refuge of the poltroon!"

He had marched as in a dream from end to end of France, to find himself face to face with the whole of Europe in league against him, with a million men being hastily armed to hurl him from his throne again. He had not enough men to oppose to those millions; his arsenals were depleted, his treasury empty.

After he had worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four at reorganizing his army, his finances, his machinery of war, he had to meet apathetic or openly hostile ministers, men who were ready to thwart him at every turn, who grasped at every opportunity of curtailing his power, of obscuring his ascendancy, of clipping the eagle's wings ere it soared to giddy heights again.

He was forced to beg, to entreat, to bargain, where once he had commanded. He yielded the military dictatorship to other and far less competent hands. He granted liberty to the press, liberty of debate, liberty of election, liberty to all and sundry; but suspicion still lurked around him. Men suspected his sincerity, they mistrusted his promises, they feared that Olympian ambition which had pre-

cipitated France into humiliation and brought the strangers' armies within her gates.

He saw it all well enough. His far-seeing mind and eagle eyes missed nothing—neither a look of indecision nor an indication of revolt. He saw it all, but he could do nothing, for he, too, felt overwhelmed by the wave of disunion and discouragement. Faith in himself, energy in action, had gone. He envisaged the possibility of a vanquished and dismembered France.

Above all, he had lost belief in his star—the star of his destiny, which, rising over his humble birthplace in the little island of Corsica, had guided him step by step from triumph to triumph, to the highest pinnacle of glory to which man's ambition has ever reached. That star had been dimmed once; its radiance was no longer unquenchable.

"Destiny has turned against me at last," he said, "and in her I have lost my most valuable helpmate."

Soon the whole of Europe had declared war against him. In a final impassioned speech he turned to his ministers and to the representatives of his people.

"Help me to save France!" he begged. "Afterward we'll settle our quarrels."

One hundred days after he began his march from the Gulf of Juan in the wake of his eagle, he started from Paris with the army which he loved, and which alone he trusted, to meet Europe and his fate on the plains of Belgium.

In Brussels, on the 17th of June, they danced late into the night.

Within the next twenty-four hours the destinies of the world would be changed by the hand of God. How hide from timid eyes the sense of this oncoming crisis? How stop for a few brief hours the flow of women's tears?

The ball should have been postponed; Her Grace of Richmond was willing that it should be so. How could men and women dance, flirt, and make merry while death was already reckoning the heavy toll of brave young lives to be demanded on the morrow? But who knows England who has not seen her at the hour of danger?

Put off the ball—perish the thought! The timid townfolk of Brussels and the ladies of the French royalist party, who were in great numbers in the city, might think there was something amiss. What was amiss? Some gallant young men would go on the morrow and conquer or die for their country's honor. There's nothing amiss in that!

Open your salons, *madame la duchesse!* The

soldiers of Britain will come to your ball. They will laugh and dance and flirt to-night, as bravely as they will die to-morrow.

Gordon and De Lancey, Crawford and Ponsonby and Halkett, aye, and Wellington, too! What immortal names are spoken by the flunkies to-night as they usher in these brave men into the hostess's presence! The ballroom is brilliantly illuminated with hundreds of wax candles; the women have put on their prettiest dresses, displaying bare arms and dazzling shoulders; the men are in showy uniforms, glittering with stars and decorations. Orange, Brunswick, Nassau, English, Belgian, Scottish, French—all are there, gay with gold and silver braid.

The confusion of tongues is greater surely than about the Tower of Babel. German and French and English, Scots accent and Irish brogue, pedantic Hanoverian and lusty Brunswick tones—all and more of these varied sounds mingle with one another, half drowning the strains of the Viennese orchestra which discourses dreamy waltzes from behind a bower of crimson roses. Ponderous Flemish wives of city burgomasters gaze open-mouthed at the elegant ladies of the old French noblesse; shy Belgian misses peep enviously at their more self-reliant English friends.

And the hostess smiles equally graciously upon all. She is ready with a bright word of welcome for everybody now, just as she will be ready with a mute look of farewell when, by Wellington's command, one officer after another will slip out of this hospitable house, out into the rainy night, for a hurried visit to lodgings or barracks to collect a few necessities, and then to the post of duty and danger.

Bobby Clyffurde only saw Crystal de Cambray from afar. He had his commission in Colin Halkett's brigade. His orders were the same as those of many others to-night—to put in an appearance at her grace's ball; to dispel any fears that might be confided to him through a fair partner's lips; to show confidence, courage, and gaiety, and at ten o'clock to report for duty.

The throng in the ballroom was great, and Crystal de Cambray was the center of a very close and exclusive little crowd, as indeed were all the ladies of the old French noblesse, who were here in their numbers. They had left their country in the wake of their de-throned king, and, despite the anxieties and sorrows of the past three months, they had filled the quiet towns of Belgium—Ghent, Brussels, Charleroi—with the atmosphere of

their elegance and their unimpeachable good taste.

Clyffurde knew that the Comte de Cambray had settled in Brussels with his daughter and sister. The English colony there provided the royalist fugitives with many friends, and Ghent was already overfull with the immediate entourage of the king. But Bobby had not met either the count or Crystal again. He had crossed over to England almost directly after that final and fateful interview with them; he had obtained his commission, and was back again in Belgium as a fighting man, ready for the work which was expected from Britain's sons by the whole of Europe.

To-night he saw her again. His instinct, intuition, prescience, what you will, had told him that he would meet her here; and when he caught sight of her across the crowded room she had never seemed more exquisite or more desirable. She was dressed all in white, with arms and shoulders bare, her fair hair dressed in the quaint mode of the moment, with a high comb and a multiplicity of curls. She had a bunch of white roses in her belt, and over her shoulders was a shawl of gossamer lace, through which gleamed the shimmering whiteness of her skin.

Clyffurde would gladly have thrown all pride to the winds for the right to run straight to her across the room, to fall at her feet, to encircle her knees, and to wring from her a word of comfort or of trust. For one moment the impulse seemed absolutely irresistible; but the next she had turned to Maurice de Saint-Genis, who was never absent from her side, and who seemed to hover over her with an air of proprietorship and triumphant mastery which caused Clyffurde to grind his heel into the oak floor, and to smother a bitter curse which had risen involuntarily to his lips.

The Duchesse d'Agen spoke to him once, while he stood watching Crystal as she walked through the mazes of a quadrille with her hand in that of Saint-Genis.

"They look well matched, do they not, Mr. Clyffurde?" *madame* said in broken English, and with something of her usual tartness. "And you—are you not going to recognize old friends, may I ask?"

He turned abruptly, and the hot blood rushed up to his cheeks, so sudden had been the wave of memory which flooded his brain at the sound of *madame's* voice. He stooped and kissed the aristocratic little hand which was so cordially held out to him.

"Old friends, *madame la duchesse*?" he queried with a quick sigh of bitterness. "You

forget that it was as a traitor and a liar that you knew me last!"

"It was as a young fool that I knew you all the time," she retorted tartly, even though a kindly smile tempered the gruffness of her sally. "The male creature, my dear Mr. Clyffurde," she added, "was intended by nature to be a selfish beast. When he ceases to think of himself, he loses his bearings and flounders in a quagmire of unprofitable heroism which benefits no one."

"Did I do that?" asked Clyffurde with a smile.

"That and more. Look at the muddle you have made of things! Crystal has never got over that wretched engagement of hers to Victor de Marmont, which failed so miserably. She is no happier now with Maurice de Saint-Genis than she would have been with—well, with anybody else who might have had the good sense to woo and win her in a straightforward, proper, and selfish masculine way."

"Mlle. de Cambray, I understand," said Clyffurde stiffly, "is formally affianced to M. de Saint-Genis."

"She is not formally affianced, as you so pedantically put it, my friend," replied *madame* with her accustomed acerbity; "but she probably will marry him, if he comes out of this abominable war alive, and if the King of France—whom may God protect!—comes into his own again. His majesty has taken those two young jackanapes under his most gracious protection, and has promised Maurice an appointment at his court, if he ever has a court again."

"Then Mlle. de Cambray must be very happy—for which, if I dare say so, I am heartily rejoiced."

"So am I," said the duchess; "but let me at the same time tell you this—I have always known that Englishmen were peculiarly idiotic in certain important matters of life, but I must say that I had no idea idiocy could reach the boundless proportions which it has done in your case. Well," she added with sudden gentleness, "farewell for the present, *mon preux chevalier*. It is not too late, remember, to bear in mind certain old axioms both of chivalry and of common sense—the most obvious of which is that nothing is gained by sitting open-mouthed while some one else gets the largest helpings at supper. And if it is any comfort to you to know that I never believed Saint-Genis's story of lonely inns, murderous banditti and what not, well, then, I give you that information for what you may choose to make of it!"

And with a final friendly nod and a gentle pressure of her aristocratic hand on his, which warmed and comforted Clyffurde's sore heart, she turned away and was quickly swallowed up by the crowd.

As the evening progressed, in spite of rain and blustering wind outside, the ballroom became unpleasantly hot. Dancing was in full swing, and the orchestra had just struck up the first strains of a waltz—that inspiring new dance, the latest importation from Vienna, of which dowagers strongly disapproved, deeming it ungraceful, if not indecent, but in which the younger folk delighted.

After the last quadrille, Maurice de Saint-Genis had led Crystal away from the ballroom to a small boudoir adjoining it. Here the cool air from outside fanned the curtains, and stirred the leaves and petals of a bank of roses that formed a background to a couple of seats—obviously arranged for the convenience of two persons who desired quiet conversation well away from prying eyes and ears.

Here Crystal had been sitting with Maurice for the past quarter of an hour. From the ballroom there came as in a dream the gentle lilt of the waltz. Behind her, a cluster of sweet-scented crimson roses filled the air with their fragrance. Crystal felt that she did not care to talk, only to sit here quietly with the sound of the music in her ears and the scent of roses in her nostrils.

Maurice sat beside her, but he did not hold her hand. He was leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, and he talked much and earnestly, while she listened half absently, like one in a dream.

She had heard her aunt speak of the strange doings of Dr. Mesmer in Paris, years ago. He had even involved proud Marie Antoinette in an unpleasant scandal with his weird incantations and wizardlike acts, whereby people were sent at his will into a curious torpor. It was neither sleep nor yet wakefulness, they said; it produced a strange sense of unreality and dreaminess, and visions of things unsubstantial and unearthly.

Sitting here surrounded with roses, and with that languorous lilt in her ear, Crystal felt as if she, too, were under the influence of some unseen Mesmer, who had lulled the activity of her brain into a kind of wakeful sleep, even while her senses remained keenly, vitally, on the alert. She knew, for instance, that Maurice spoke of the coming struggle, the final fight for king and country. He had been enrolled in a Nassau regiment, under the command of

the Prince of Orange. He expected to be in the thick of a fight to-morrow.

"Bonaparte never waits," Crystal heard him say quite distinctly. "He is always ready to attack. Audacity and a bold use of his artillery were always his most effectual weapons."

And he went on to tell her of his own plans, his future, his hopes. He spoke of the possibility of death, and of this being a last farewell. Crystal tried to follow him, tried to respond when he spoke of his love for her.

"If it were not for my love for you, Crystal," he said almost fiercely, "I could not bear to face possible death to-morrow—not without telling you—not without making reparation for my sin."

And still, in that curious, trancelike sense of aloofness, Crystal murmured vaguely:

"Sin, Maurice? What sin do you mean?"

It seemed that he gave her no direct reply; he spoke once more only of his love.

"Love atones for all sins," he reiterated with passionate earnestness. Such love as I have for you, Crystal, makes everything else—even sin, even cowardice—seem insignificant and meaningless."

She was too weary to argue the point, or to get his sophistry into her head. She felt out of tune with him to-night. His passionate words of love found only a cold response in her heart.

For the past three months she had constantly been at war with her own self for this. She hated and despised herself for the numbness of heart which had so unaccountably taken all the zest and joy out of her life. What had become of the girlish love that had invested Maurice de Saint-Genis with the attributes of a hero? What had he done that the pedestal on which her ideality had set him should have proved of such brittle clay?

He was on the eve of fighting for his king and country, ready to give his life for the cause which she loved so ardently; he was even now speaking tender words of love and of farewell; yet she was out of tune with him. His voice almost irritated her, for it dragged her out of that delicious, dreamlike torpor which momentarily peopled the world for her with white-winged angels, which filled the air with soft murmurings and sweet sounds, and with a divine fragrance that was not of this earth.

It must have been that she grew sleepy. Probably the heat weighed her eyelids down; certainly she found it impossible to keep her eyes open. Maurice apparently thought that she felt faint. Always in the same vague way,

she heard him making suggestions for her comfort. Could he get her some wine? Should he try to find *madame la duchesse*?

Then she realized how she longed for a little rest, for perfect solitude, for perfect freedom to give herself over to the sweet torpor which paralyzed her brain and limbs. She did not know whether it was weariness or the subtle influence of some mysterious agency; but she did know that she would have given almost anything for a few minutes' complete solitude.

So she contrived to smile and to look up almost gaily into Maurice's anxious face.

"I think, Maurice," she said, "that I am just a little bit sleepy. If I could remain alone for five minutes, I would go honestly to sleep, and not be ashamed of myself. Could you—could you just leave me for five or ten minutes? And Maurice, will you draw that screen a little nearer?" she added, affecting a little yawn. "Nobody can see me then; and really, really I shall be all right, if I could have a few minutes' quiet sleep."

"You shall, Crystal, of course you shall," said Maurice.

He arranged a cushion behind her head, put a footstool to her feet, and pulled the screen forward so that now—where she sat—no one could see her from the ballroom. As the orchestra, in response to repeated cries of "*Encore!*" from the dancers, had embarked upon a new waltz, she was not likely to be disturbed.

"I'll try to find *madame la duchesse*," he said. "I'll tell her that you are quite well, but must not be disturbed."

She caught his hand and gave it a little squeeze.

"You are kind, Maurice," she murmured.

"You won't go away without waking me?"

"No, no, of course not," he replied. "It still wants a quarter before ten."

The screen shut off the glare from the candles. The sense of isolation was complete and delicious. The roses smelled very sweet, the soft strains of the waltz sounded like elfin music. And like elfin music—tender, fitful, dreamy—an exquisite languor stole into Crystal's limbs. She was not asleep, yet she was in dreamland—all alone in semidarkness, with the fragrance of crimson roses in her nostrils and their velvety petals brushing against her cheek.

Like elfin music—sweet strains of infinite sadness—the tune of the infinite mingling with the semblance of reality! Like elfin music, or like the voice of a human being in pain, the note of sadness becoming the only real note?

What really happened Crystal never rightly knew. Whenever in the future her memory went back to this hour, she could not be sure whether in truth she had been walking or dreaming. She could not tell at what precise moment she became conscious of a presence close beside her, just behind the bank of roses, and of a voice—low, earnest, quivering with passionate emotion—that reached her ear as if through the tender melodies played by the orchestra.

It almost seemed to her, when she thought over all the circumstances in her mind, that she must have been subtly conscious of the presence all along—even while Maurice was still with her, and she felt so curiously languid, longing only for darkness and solitude.

Something encompassed her now that she could not define—the warmth of love, the sense of protection and security. It was almost as if unseen arms, strong and devoted and selfless, held her closely, shielding her from evil and from the taint of selfish human passions.

Presently she heard her name, whispered low and with a note of tender appeal. Her eyes were closed, and she paid no heed; but the appeal was once more whispered—this time more insistently.

"Who calls?" she murmured, almost against her will.

"An unfortunate whom you hate and despise, and who would give his life to serve you."

"Who is it?" she reiterated.

"A poor, heart-broken wretch who could not keep away from your side, and who longs for one more sound of your voice, even though it utters words more cruel than man can stand."

"What would you like to hear?"

"One word of comfort to ease that terrible sting of hate which has burned into my very soul, till every minute of life has become unendurable agony."

"How could I know," she asked—and now her eyes were wide open, gazing out into nothingness, not turned yet in the direction whence that dream-voice came—"how could I know that my hatred made you suffer, or that you cared for comfort from me?"

"How could you know, Crystal?" the voice replied. "You could know that, my dear, just as surely as you know that in a stormy night the sky is dark, just as you know that when heavy clouds obscure the blue ether above, no ray of sunshine warms the shivering earth. Just as you know that you are beautiful and exquisite, so you knew, Crystal, that I loved you from the depths of my soul."

"How could I guess?"

"By that subtle sense which every human being has. And you did guess it, Crystal, else you would not have hated me as you did."

"I hated you because I thought you a traitor."

"Is it too late to swear to you that my only thought was to serve you—"

"By working against my king and country?" she retorted, with just this one brief flash of her old vehemence.

"By working for my country and for yours. I swear it by your sweet eyes—by your dear mouth that hurt me so cruelly that evening. Crystal, I swear to you that I was never false. False, great Heaven, when with every drop of my blood, with every fiber of my heart, with every nerve, every sinew, every thought, I love you!"

Again Crystal felt that delicious sense of warmth—the sense of security in a man's encompassing love which women prize above everything else on earth.

The music was just an accompaniment to that low, earnest whispering. The soft strains of the violins made it seem like a voice that comes through a veil of dreams. Instinctively Crystal began to hum the waltz tune. Her head, with its quaint coronet of fair curls, nodded in time to the languid lilt.

"Will you dance with me, Crystal?"

"No! No!" she protested.

"Just once! To-morrow we fight—let us dance to-night!"

Before she could protest further, her will seemed to fall away from her. She knew that her father and her aunt would be angry. She knew that Maurice, to whom she had plighted her troth, had branded this man as a liar and a traitor. Her father believed him to be a traitor, and she—what had he done to disprove Maurice's accusations? A few words of passionate protestations—did they count? He wore his king's uniform; but many careless adventurers did that in these strenuous times.

How could she dare to show herself in public on his arm, in a crowded ballroom? Yet she could not refuse. Surely it was all a dream, and in a dream we are but the slaves of circumstance and have no will of our own.

She was very young, she loved to dance, and she had heard that Englishmen danced well. Besides, it was all a dream. She would wake in a moment or two and find herself sitting quietly among the roses, with Maurice beside her, telling her of his love and of their happy future together.

But in the mean while the dream was lasting.

Her partner was a perfect dancer, and this new, delicious waltz—inspiring yet languorous, rhythmical and half barbaric—sent a keen feeling of joy and of zest into her whole being.

She was not conscious of the stares that were leveled at her as she appeared among the crowd in the ballroom, her face flushed with excitement, her perfect figure moving with exquisite grace to the measure of the dance.

The last dance together! He held her and guided her through the throng, her tiny feet moving in unison with his. All the world had vanished; he had her to himself. For these few happy moments he could hold her and refuse to let her go. He did not care—nor did she—that many curious and some angry glances followed their every movement. Till the last bar was played, till the final chord was struck, she was absolutely his, for she had given up her will to him.

The last dance together! He sent his heart to her, all his heart. The music helped him, and the rhythm. The very atmosphere of the room, rose-scented, helped him to make her understand. He could have kissed her hair, so close were the heaped-up fair curls to his mouth. He could have whispered to her—and nobody would hear. He could have told her something, at any rate, of the love that filled his heart.

But he did not kiss her, nor did he speak. Though he was quite sure that she would understand, he was equally sure that she could not respond. She was not his—not his in the world of realities, at any rate. Her heart belonged to the friend of her childhood, the only man whom she would ever love, the man by whom Clyffurde had been content to be defamed and vilified in order that she might remain happy in her choice.

So he was content only to hold her, his arm round her waist, one hand holding hers imprisoned—she herself becoming more and more the creature of his dreams, the angel that haunted him in wakefulness and in sleep; immortally his bride, yet never to be wholly his again as she was now in this heavenly moment where they stood together within the pale of eternity.

In this, their last dance together!

Far into the night, into the small hours of the morning, Crystal de Cambray sat by the open window of her tiny bedroom in the small apartment which her father had taken for himself and his family in the Rue du Marteau.

She sat with one elbow resting on the window-sill, her right hand nervously fingering a

letter which she held. Jeanne had handed it to her when she came home from the ball. M. de Saint-Genis, Jeanne explained, had given it to her earlier in the evening—soon after ten o'clock, it must have been. *Monsieur le marquis* seemed in a great hurry, but he made Jeanne swear most solemnly that Mlle. Crystal should have the letter as soon as she came home.

Crystal was puzzled. She had taken leave of Maurice shortly before ten o'clock, when he had told her that his orders were to quit the ball and report at once at headquarters. He had seemed very despondent, Crystal thought, and his parting words had in them all the sadness of a last farewell. Crystal had felt a tinge of remorse, when she saw how sad he was, that she had not responded more warmly to his kiss. Her heart went out to him with pity and with sorrow.

And now here was this letter. She was a long time before she made up her mind to open it. The paper, damp with rain, seemed to hold a certain fatefulness within its folds. At last she unfolded it and read what Maurice had written a few moments before he left. It must have taken him some time to pen the lengthy epistle:

MY BEAUTIFUL CRYSTAL:

I may never come back. Something tells me that my life, such as it is—empty and worthless enough, Heaven knows—has nearly run its full course. But if I do come back to claim the happiness which your love holds out for me, I will not face you again with so deep a stain upon my honor. I did not tell you before, because I was too great a coward. I could not bear to think that you would despise me—I could not encounter the look of contempt in your eyes; but now I speak because the next few hours will atone for everything. If I come back, you will forgive. If I fall, you will mourn. In either case I shall be happy that you know.

Crystal, in all my life I have spoken only one lie, and that was three months ago when I set out to reclaim the king's money, which had been filched from you on the road, and returned empty-handed. I found the money and I found the thief. No thief he, Crystal, but just a quixotic man, who desired to serve his country, our cause, and you. That man was your friend Mr. Clyffurde. I don't think I was ever jealous of him; I am not jealous of him now. Our love, Crystal, is too great and too strong to fear rivalry from any one.

He took the money from you because he knew that Victor de Marmont, with a body of men to help him, would have filched it from you for the benefit of the Corsican. He took the money from you because he knew that neither you nor the

count would have listened to any warnings from him. He took the money from you with the sole purpose of conveying it to the king.

Then I found him, and taunted him, until the temptation came to me to act the part of a coward and a traitor. And this I did, Crystal, only because I loved you—because I knew that I could never win you while I was poor and in humble circumstances. I soon found out that Clyffurde was a friend. I begged him to let me have the money, so that I might take it to the king and earn consideration and a reward. That was my sin, Crystal, and also that I lied to you to disguise the sorry rôle which I had played. Clyffurde gave me the money because I told him how we loved each other, you and I, and that happiness could come to you only through our mutual love. He acted well, though in truth I meant to do him no wrong. Later Victor de Marmont came upon me and wrested the money from me. I was helpless to guard that for which I had played the part of a coward.

I have eased my soul by telling you this, Crystal, and I know that no hard thoughts of me will dwell in your mind while I do all that a man can do for honor, king, and country. Perhaps the next few hours will atone for everything.

Yours in love and sorrow,

MAURICE.

The letter, crumpled and damp, remained in Crystal's hand while she sat by the open window and listened to the sounds of horses and men moving out to meet the army of the great adventurer. The paper was damp with her tears now; they had fallen upon it while she reread it a second and a third time.

"A quixotic man," Maurice said airily. How little he understood! How well she knew what had been the motive of that quixotic action!

She had learned much to-night in the mazes of a waltz. Now, when she closed her eyes, she could still feel the dreamy motion with that strong arm round her; she could hear the languid lilt of the music, and all the elfish whisperings that reached her ear through the monotonous cadence of the dance. Of what her heart had felt then, she need now no longer be ashamed. All that should shame her now was her mistake in the past, the belief that the hand which had held hers on that evening in Brestalou could have been the hand of a traitor; that the low-toned voice which spoke to her so earnestly of friendship could be raised for the utterance of a lie.

Of such thoughts indeed she could be ashamed, and of her cruelty that other night in Paris, when she had made Clyffurde suffer so abominably through her injustice and her contempt.

"Perhaps the next few hours will atone for everything," Maurice had added. Perhaps; but they could not erase the past, they could not control the future. Maurice would come back—Crystal prayed earnestly that he might; but Clyffurde was gone out of her life forever. How could she hope ever to meet a friend who had gone away determined never to see her again?

A last dance together! Well, they had had it, and that was the end—the end of a sweet romance that had had no beginning. He had gone now, as Maurice had gone, as all the men had gone who had listened to their country's call. Crystal could not convey to him even by a message, by a word, that she understood all that he had done for her, all that his actions had meant of devotion, of self-effacement, of pure and tender love.

A last dance together, and that had been the end. Even thoughts of him would be forbidden her after this. Her promise belonged to Maurice, but her heart was no longer hers to give.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TARPEIAN ROCK

RAIN, rain, all the morning! God's instrument for the remodeling of the destinies of the world.

God chose to soak the earth on that day; and the formidable artillery that had swept the plateau of Austerlitz, the vales of Marengo, the cemetery of Eylau, was rendered useless for the time being because up in the inscrutable kingdom of the sky a cloud had burst, water had soaked the soil of Belgium, and the wheels of artillery-wagons sank axle-deep in the mud.

Was it indeed a shower of rain that changed the destinies of Europe? Ye materialists, ye philosophers, answer that!

Was it the rain that fell in such torrents on the morning of that stupendous 18th of June which decided the destinies of myriads of people, of entire nations, kingdoms, and empires? Rather was it not that God chose to show this world of pygmies and heroes, of slaves and conquerors, how easily He governs all things, and, in order to show it, He selected that simple and seemingly trifling means, just a heavy shower of rain?

At half past eleven Napoleon's cannon began to roar on the rolling plain of Mont Saint-Jean. Had it not rained so heavily, that same compelling artillery would have begun its

devastating work earlier in the day—at six o'clock, perhaps, or even at dawn—adding another five, six, seven hours to the length of that awful day. There would have been another five, six, seven hours wherein to tax the heroic persistence of the British troops; another five, six, seven hours of dogged resistance on the one side, of impetuous charges on the other, before the arrival of Blücher's Prussians and the turning of the scales against the daring gambler who had staked his all.

But it was only at half past eleven that the cannon began to roar, and the undulating plain carried the echo like a thunder-roll from heaving billow to heaving billow, till it broke against the silent majesty of the forest of Soignes.

Here, with the forest as a background, is the highest point of Mont Saint-Jean. Here, beneath an overhanging elm, all day on horse-back, anxious, cool, and heroic, is Wellington. There is a rain of bullets all round him as he ceaselessly watches the far-away horizon, wrapped now in fog, anon in smoke, and later in gathering darkness. He is watching for the promised Prussian army that is to ease the terrible burden of that desperate stand which the British troops are bearing and have borne all day with unflinching courage.

It is in vain that his aides-de-camp beg him to move away from that perilous position.

"My lord," cries Lord Hill, "if you are killed, what are we to do?"

"The same as I do now," replies Wellington, unmoved. "Hold this position to the last man!"

Then, with a sudden outburst of vehemence that seems to pierce the rigid armor of British self-control, he calls to his old comrades of Salamanca and Vittoria:

"Boys, which of us can think of retreating? What would England think of us, if we do?"

All day the British army has held its ground against the overwhelming attack of Napoleon's magnificent army; raw recruits, some of them, against the veterans of Jena and of Wagram. They have been ordered to hold the place to the last man, and in close and serried squares they have held their ground ever since half past eleven this morning, while time and again the flower of Napoleon's world-famed cavalry has been hurled against them.

Cuirassiers, chasseurs, lancers, up they come to the charge, like whirlwinds up the declivities of the plateau. Like a whirlwind they rush upon those impenetrable squares, attacking from every side, making desperate onsets upon the unshakable walls of red-coats; slashing at

the bayonets with their swords, at the crimson breasts with their lances, firing their pistols pointblank into the British ranks.

Twice, thrice—nay, a dozen times—they return to the charge. The plateau gleams with brandished steel like a thousand flashes of forked lightning on the vast canopy of a stormy sky.

From midday till after four o'clock a mysterious haze covers this field of noble deeds. Fog after the rain wraps the gently billowing Flemish ground in a white, semitransparent veil; it covers with impartial coolness all the mighty actions, the heroic charges, and still more heroic stands, all the silent, uncomplaining sufferings, the glorious deaths, all the courage and all the endurance.

Through the gray mists we see a medley of moving colors—blue and gray and scarlet and black; of shakos and sabretaches, of English and French and Hanoverians and Scots, of epaulets and bare knees. We hear the sound of carbine and artillery fire, the clank of swords and bayonets, the call of bugle and trumpet, and the wail of the melancholy pibroch.

We see the attack on Hougomont, the appearance of Bülow on the heights of Saint-Lambert, the charge of the Inniskillings and the Scots Greys, the death of valiant Ponsonby. We see Marshal Ney, Prince of Moskowa—the bravest soldier of France, *le plus brave des braves*—we see him wherever the mêlée is thickest, wherever danger is most nigh. His magnificent uniform torn to shreds, his gold lace tarnished, his hair and whiskers singed, his face blackened by powder, indomitable, superb, we hear him cry:

"Where are those British bullets? Is there not one left for me?"

He knows that the plain of Mont Saint-Jean is the great gambling-table on which the supreme gambler—Napoleon, once Emperor of the French and master of half the world—has staked his all.

"If we come out of this alive and conquered," he cries to Heymès, his aide-de-camp, "there will only be the hangman's rope left for us all!"

At three o'clock the fog lifts. The veil that has wrapped in a kind of mystery so many sounds, such awful and wonderful visions, is lifted now, and it reveals—what? Hougomont is invested. Brave Baring is there, with a handful of men, English and Hanoverians, making a last stand, with ten rounds of ammunition left to them per man, and the French engineers already battering in the gates of the

enclosing wall that surrounds the *château*. The farm of La Haye Sainte is taken; Ney is there, with his regiment of cuirassiers and five battalions of the Old Guard. The English lines on the heights of Mont Saint-Jean are apparently giving way.

We see, too, a vast hecatomb. Glory and ambition are claiming thousands of victims. The dead and dying lie scattered like pawns upon an abandoned chess-board, the humble pawns in this huge and final gamble for supremacy and power, for national existence and for liberty. Hougoumont, La Haye Sainte, Papelotte, are sown with illustrious dead; but on the plateau of Mont Saint-Jean the British still hold their ground.

Wellington is still there on the heights, with the majestic trees of Soignes behind him, the stately canopy of the elm above his head—more frigid than before, more heroic, but also more desperately anxious.

"Blücher or nightfall!" he sighs, as a fresh cavalry charge is hurled against those indomitable British squares.

It is the thirteenth assault, and still the infantrymen stand or kneel on one knee, with muskets and bayonets presented to the foe. They fire, fall out, and reform again. Battered and shaken they may be, but still they stand and fire with coolness and precision. The ranks are not broken yet.

Officers ride up to the duke, to tell him that the situation has become desperate, their regiments are decimated, their men exhausted. They ask for fresh orders, but he has only one answer for them:

"There are no fresh orders, save to hold out to the last man!"

Down in the valley at La Belle Alliance is the great gambler—the man who to-day will either be emperor again, a greater, mightier monarch than even he has ever been, or will sink to a status which perhaps the meanest of his erstwhile subjects would never envy.

Just now—at four o'clock, when the fog has lifted—he is flushed with excitement, exultant in the belief in victory. The English center on Mont Saint-Jean is giving way at last, he is told.

"The beginning of retreat!" he cries.

And he, who had been anxious at Austerlitz, despondent at Marengo, is gay and happy and full of hope.

"De Marmont," he calls to his faithful friend, "De Marmont, ride to Paris now; tell them that victory is ours! No, no," he adds excitedly, "don't go all the way. Ride to Genappe, and send a messenger to Paris from

there; then come back to be with us in the hour of victory!"

And Victor de Marmont rides off in order to proclaim to the world at large the great victory which the emperor has won this day over the armies of Europe banded against him.

From far away on the road of Ohain has come the first rumor that Blücher's Prussians are nigh—still a long march from the battlefield, but advancing, advancing. The rumor—it was merely the whispering of the wind, but still a rumor—means fresh courage to the tired British troops. It has also come to the ears of the emperor, of Ney, and of all the officers of the French staff.

They know—these brave soldiers of Napoleon, who have fought and admired their brave foe—that the First and Second Life Guards are decimated by now; that entire British and German regiments are cut up; that Picton is dead, the Scots Greys almost annihilated. They know what havoc their cavalry charges have made in the squares of British infantry. They know that heroism and tenacity and determination must give way at last before superior numbers, before fresh troops, before persistent, ever-renewed attacks.

Only a few fresh troops, and Ney declares that he can conquer the final dogged endurance of the British troops before they, in their turn, receive the support of Blücher and his Prussians, and before nightfall can give them a chance of rest. So he sends Colonel Heymès to his emperor with the urgent message:

"More troops, I entreat, more troops, and I can break the English center before the Prussians come!"

None knows better than he that this is the great hazard on which the life and honor of his emperor has been staked, that imperial France is fighting hand to hand with Great Britain, each for her national existence and the honor of her flag. Imperial France—bold, daring, impetuous! Great Britain—tenacious, firm, and impassive!

On the one side there is Wellington under the elm-tree, calmly scanning the horizon while bullets whiz past around his head, and ordering his troops to hold on to the last man. On the other side, the emperor on horseback, under a hail-storm of shot and shell, riding from end to end of his lines.

Ney and his division of cuirassiers and grenadiers of the Old Guard have just obeyed the emperor's orders to take La Haye Sainte at all costs. Now, flushed with victory, the intrepid marshal sends his urgent message to Napoleon:

"More troops, and I can break the English center before the Prussians come!"

"More troops?" cries the emperor in despair. "Where am I to get them from? Am I a creator of men?"

And from far away the rumor:

"Blücher and the Prussians are nigh!"

"Stop that rumor from spreading to the ears of our men! Don't let them know it!" adjures Napoleon in a message to Ney.

He sends staff-officers to every point of the field of battle to shout and proclaim the news that it is Grouchy who is nigh—Grouchy with reinforcements. The news gives fresh heart to the emperor's troops.

"*Vive l'empereur!*" they shout, more certain than ever of victory.

The gray day has yielded at last to the kiss of the sun. Far away at Braine l'Alleud a vivid streak of gold has rent the bank of heavy clouds. It is now close on seven o'clock—there are two more hours to nightfall—and Blücher is not yet here.

Some of the Prussians—Von Bülow's corps—have debouched on Planchenoit, but Napoleon's Old Guard have turned them out again; and from Limale, in the east, there now comes the sound of heavy cannonade, as if Grouchy had come upon Blücher after all, and all hopes of further reinforcements for the British troops were finally at an end.

Napoleon—emperor still, and still flushed with victory—looks through his glasses on the British lines. To him it seems that they are shaken, that Wellington is fighting with the last of his men. This is the hour, then, when victory waits attentive, ready to bestow her crown on him who can hold out and fight the longest—on him who at the last can deliver an irresistible attack.

And Napoleon gives the order for the final assault, which must be more formidable, more overpowering, than any that have gone before. The plateau of Mont Saint-Jean, he commands, must be carried at all costs!

Once more to the charge, cuirassiers, lancers, and grenadiers! Once more strew the plain with your dying and your dead! Up, Milhaud, with your guards, Poret, with your grenadiers, Michel, with your chasseurs! Up, ye heroes of a dozen campaigns, of a hundred victories! Up, ye old growlers with the fur bonnets—Napoleon's invincible Old Guard, with Ney himself to lead you, a hero among heroes, the bravest where all are brave!

Have you ever seen a tidal wave of steel rising and surging under the lash of the gale?

So they come now, those cuirassiers and lancers and chasseurs, their helmets, their swords, their lances gleaming in the golden light of the sinking sun. In closed ranks, stirrup to stirrup, they swoop down into the valley and rise again, scaling the muddy slope. Superb as on parade, with their finest generals at their head—Milhaud, Wathier, Delort, Lefebvre-Desnouettes, and Ney himself!

Splendid they are, and certain of victory. They gallop past as if at a review on the Place du Carrousel, opposite the windows of the Tuileries, all to the repeated cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*"

As they thunder past, the wounded and the dying lift themselves up from the blood-stained earth, and raise their feeble voices to join in that triumphant call:

"*Vive l'empereur!*"

There's a veteran there, who fought at Austerlitz and at Jena; he has three stripes upon his sleeve, but both his legs are shattered, and he lies on the roadside propped up against a hedge. As the superb cavalry ride proudly by, he shouts lustily:

"Forward, comrades! A last victorious charge! Long live the emperor!"

After that, who was to blame? Was human agency to blame? Did Ney—the finest cavalry leader in Napoleon's magnificent army, the veteran of a hundred glorious victories—did he make the one blunder of his military career by dividing his troops into too many separate columns, instead of concentrating them for the one all-powerful attack upon the British center? Did he indeed mistake the way and lead his splendid cavalry where the hollow road of Ohain lay like a trap in their line of advance?

Or did the obscure traitor, of whom some chroniclers of Waterloo have spoken, betray this fresh attack by giving timely warning to Wellington?

Was any man to blame? Was it not rather the hand of God that had already fallen with divine weight upon the ambitious and reckless adventurer? Was it not the voice of the Almighty that spoke to him through the cannon's roar of Waterloo:

"So far but no farther shalt thou go! Enough of thy power and thy ambition! Enough of this scourge of bloodshed and of misery which I have allowed thee to wield for so long! Enough of devastated homes, of starvation, and of poverty! Enough of the fatherless and of the widow!"

At the crest of the slope, the British troops hear the thunder of thousands of horses' hoofs,

galloping to this last tremendous charge. Sturdy, wearied hands, black with powder and stained with blood, grasp their weapons more firmly still. They wait, those valiant men of Britain's thin, red line, for that thundering charge, with wide-open eyes fixed upon the brow of the hill. They are ready for death, but they are not prepared to yield.

Along the edge of the plateau in a huge semicircle that extends from Hougomont to the Brussels road the British gunners wait for the order to fire.

Behind them Wellington, eagle-eyed and calm, scours the British lines from end to end. Valiant Maitland is there with his brigade of guards, and Adam with his artillery. There are Vandeleur's and Vivian's cavalry and Colin Halkett's guards—heroes all, ready to die, and hearing the approach of death in that distant roar of thunder, the onrush of Napoleon's invincible cavalry.

Here, too, farther out toward the east and the west, extending the British lines along the plateau, are William Halkett's Hanoverians, Duplat's German brigade, the Dutch and Belgians, the Brunswickers, and Ompteda's decimated corps. The French royalists are here, too, scattered among the foreign troops—brother prepared to fight brother to the death! Saint-Genis is among the Brunswickers. Bobby Clyffurde is with Maitland's guards.

And now the wave of steel is surging up the incline. The gleam of shining metal pierces the distant haze, helmets and lances glitter in the slowly sinking sun, while from billow to billow the echo brings to straining ears the triumphant cry:

"Vive l'empereur!"

Five minutes later the British artillery, ranged along the crest, has made a huge breach in that solid, moving mass of horses and of steel. Quickly the breach is repaired; the ranks close up again. This is a parade—a review! The eyes of France are upon her sons: *"Vive l'empereur!"*

Still they come. Volley after volley from the British guns make deadly havoc among those glistening ranks; but still they come!

Ney's horse is killed under him—the fifth to-day; but he quickly extricates himself from saddle and stirrups, and continues on foot. In his hand is the sword that conquered at Austerlitz, at Eylau, and at Moskowa. Round him the grenadiers of the Old Guard—they with the fur bonnets and the grizzled mustaches—tighten up their ranks. They advance behind the cavalry, and after every volley from the British guns they shout loudly:

"Vive l'empereur!"

Now the tidal wave has by sheer force of weight hurled itself upon the crest of the plateau. The Brunswickers on the left are scattered. Cleaves and Lloyd have been forced to abandon their guns; the British artillery is silenced, and the chasseurs of Michel hold the extreme edge of the upland. They turn a deadly fusillade upon Colin Halkett's brigade, already attacked by Milhaud and his guards and now severely shaken.

"See the English general!" cries Duchaud to his cuirassiers. "He is between two fires—he cannot escape!"

No, Halkett cannot escape, but he seizes the colors of the Thirty-Third, whose standard-bearer has just fallen, and whose lines threaten to break under the devastating cross-fire. He brandishes the tattered flag, high up above his head, as high as he can hold it. He calls to his men to rally, and then falls grievously wounded.

But his guards have rallied. They stand firm now, and Duchaud, biting his gray mustache, murmurs his appreciation of so gallant a foe.

"That side will win," he mutters, "who can best keep on killing!"

"Up, guards, and at them!"

Maitland's brigade of guards had been crouching in the corn, waiting for the order to charge, like red-coated lions in the ripening corn, ready to spring at the word. Death, the harvester in chief, stands by with his scythe ready for the mowing.

"Up, guards, and at them!"

Out of the corn rise Maitland and his gallant brigade. They front the three battalions of Michel's chasseurs, who were the first to reach the top of the hill. They fire, and Death with his scythe has laid three hundred low. The tricolor flag is riddled with grape-shot, and General Michel has fallen.

Then, indeed, the tidal wave of steel can advance no longer. It is confronted with an impenetrable wall—a wall of living, palpitating, heroic men—men who for hours have stood their ground and fought for the honor of Britain and of her flag. They have had their orders to hold out to the last man, and they are going to obey those orders now.

"Up, guards, and at them!"

Surprised, staggered, the chasseurs pause. Three hundred of their comrades lie dead or dying on the ground. They waver, their ranks are broken; with his last dying sigh brave General Michel tries to rally them. But he

breathes his last ere he succeeds, and the second in command loses his head. He should have ordered a bayonet charge, swift and sudden, against the red wall advancing to meet them; but he tries to rally his men, to reform their ranks—how can they reform as for parade under the deadly fire of the British guards?

Confusion begins its deadly sway. The chasseurs, under conflicting orders, stand for several minutes almost motionless under that devastating fire.

And far away on the heights of Frischermont a line of Prussian bayonets—Ziethen's corps—is seen silhouetted against the sunset sky. Wellington has seen it. Blücher has come at last!

One final effort, and the glorious end would be in sight. He gives the order for a general charge.

"Forward, boys!" cries Colonel Saltoun to his brigade. "Now is the time!"

Heads down, the British charge. The chasseurs are already scattered, but behind the chasseurs, fronting Maitland's brigade, fronting Adam and his artillery, fronting Saltoun and Colborne, the Old Guard is coming into the fight—Napoleon's Old Guard, who through twelve campaigns and a hundred victories have shown the world how to conquer and how to die. They are facing death now, and they know it, but still they cry:

"Vive l'empereur!"

Heads down, the British charge, while from Ohain comes the roar of Blücher's guns, and on the left Ziethen's men rush up to join in the final struggle.

Then the fiercest carnage begins. The Old Guard is still advancing in solid squares, solemn, unmoved, magnificent; the bronze eagles on their bonnets catch the golden rays of the setting sun. Thus they advance in face of deadly fire; they fall like corn before the scythe—a sublime suicide, to the cry of *"Vive l'empereur!"* Not one of the brigade is missing except those who are dead.

These veterans, who faced death with silent fortitude in the snows of Russia, who were as grand in their defeat at Leipsic as in the triumphs of Auerstädt or of Friedland, neither staggered nor paused in their advance. On they went, carrying their muskets on their shoulders, with a cloud of tirailleurs in front of them, right into the cross-fire of the British guns. Their loud cry of *"Vive l'empereur!"* drowns another terrible cry which some one raised a while ago and which now goes from mouth to mouth:

"We are betrayed! Sauve qui peut!"

The Prussians are on their flank, the British are charging their front, and panic is beginning to seize the most brilliant army Napoleon ever led into battle.

"Sauve qui peut!" is echoed now and re-echoed all along the crest of the plateau. It rolls down the slope into the valley, where Reille's infantry, a regiment of cuirassiers, and three more battalions of chasseurs are making ready to second the assault on Mont Saint-Jean. Reille and his infantry pause and listen. The cuirassiers halt in their upward movement. On the ridge of the plateau, where Donzelot's grenadiers have attacked the brigades of Kempt and Lambert and Pack, the whisper goes from mouth to mouth:

"We are betrayed! Sauve qui peut!"

Panic seizes the younger men; they turn their horses' heads back toward the slopes. The stampede has commenced; very soon it grows.

Ney is almost unrecognizable. His face is coal-black with powder. He has no hat, no epaulets, and only half a sword. Rage, anguish, bitterness are in his husky voice as he adjures, entreats, calls to the demoralized army, and insults it, execrates it, in turn; but nothing can stop that army now in its headlong flight.

"At least stay to see how a marshal of France dies on the field of honor!" he shouts.

But the voice which led these same men to victory at Moskowa has lost its magic. The men cry *"Vive Ney!"* but they do not stand. The stampede has become general.

In the valley below, the infantry has started to run up the slope of La Belle Alliance. After it goes the cavalry, with reins hanging loose, stirrups lost, helmets, sabretaches, carbines—anything that impedes—thrown into the fields to right and left. La Haye Sainte is evacuated, Hougoumont is abandoned, Papelotte, Planchenoit, the woods, the plains, are filled with running men and the thunder of galloping chargers.

Alone the Old Guard has remained unshaken. While all around them what was once the Grand Army is shattered, destroyed, melted like ice before a devastating fire, these veterans have continued to advance, sublime in their fortitude, in their endurance, their contempt for death.

One by one their columns are shattered, and there are none now to replace those that fall. As the gloom of night settles on this vast hecatomb on the plateau of Mont Saint-Jean, the conquerors of Jena and Friedland make their last stand around their bronze eagle—all that is left to them of the glories of the past.

And when from far away the cry of "*Sauve qui peut!*" has become only an echo, and the bronze eagle, shattered by a bullet, lies prone upon the ground, shielded against capture in its fall by a circling heap of dead; when finally night wraps all the heroism, the glory, the sorrow, and the horrors of this awful day in the sable folds of her all-embracing mantle, Napoleon's Old Guard has ceased to be.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST THROW

It was close on half past nine o'clock that evening when a couple of riders detached themselves from the surging mass of horses and men flying pell-mell toward Genappe. Slightly checking their steeds, they put them to a slower gallop and finally to a trot.

On their right a small white cottage gleamed in the moonlight. A low wall ran to right and left of it, enclosing a small yard at the back of the cottage; the wall had a gate in it which gave on the fields beyond. At the moment when the two riders, trotting slowly down the road, reached the first angle of the wall, the gate was opened and a man leading a white horse and wearing a gray redingote turned into the yard.

"*Mon dieu*, the emperor!" exclaimed one of the riders, as he drew rein.

They both turned their horses into the field, skirting the enclosing wall until they reached the gate. The white horse was now tethered to a post, and the man in the gray redingote was standing in the doorway at the rear of the cottage. The two other men dismounted, and in their turn led their horses into the yard.

At sight of them, the man in the gray redingote seemed to wake from a reverie.

"Soul," he said slowly, "is that you?"

"Yes, sire, and General Bertrand is here, too."

"What do you want?"

"We earnestly beg you, sire, to come with us to Genappe. There is not the slightest hope of rallying any portion of your army now. The Prussians are on us. You might fall into their hands."

Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, chief of Napoleon's staff, spoke very earnestly and with head uncovered, but more abruptly and harshly than he had been wont to address his master.

"I am coming! I am coming!" said the emperor, with a quick sigh of impatience. "I only wanted to be alone a moment, to think things out, to—"

"There is nothing quite so urgent, sire, as your safety," retorted the Duke of Dalmatia.

The emperor did not heed his great marshal's marked want of deference. Perhaps he was accustomed to the moods of these men whom his bounty had fed and loaded with wealth and dignities and titles in the days of his glory, and who had proved only too ready to desert him when disaster was in sight.

Without another word he turned on his heel and, pushing open the cottage door, disappeared into the darkness of the tiny room beyond. With an impatient shrug of the shoulders, Soult prepared to follow him. General Bertrand busied himself with tethering the horses; then he followed Soult into the building.

It was deserted, of course, as all isolated cottages and houses had been in the vicinity of Quatre Bras or Mont Saint-Jean. Bertrand struck a tinder and lighted a tallow candle that stood forlorn on a deal table in the center of the room. The flickering light revealed a tiny cottage kitchen, hastily abandoned but scrupulously clean, with whitewashed walls and a red-tiled floor. The painted dresser was decorated with white crockery; shiny tin pans hung in rows against the walls, and there were two or three rush chairs. Napoleon sat down.

"I again entreat you, sire—" began Soult, more earnestly than before.

But the emperor was staring straight out before him with eyes that apparently saw something beyond the white wall opposite, on which the flickering candle-light threw such weird shadows. The precious minutes sped on—minutes wherein death or capture strode with giant steps across the fields of Flanders to this lonely cottage where the once mightiest ruler in Europe sat dreaming of what might have been.

The silence of the night was broken by the thunder of flying horses' hoofs, by cries of "*Sauve qui peut!*" and by distant volleys of artillery, proclaiming from far away that death had not yet finished all its work. Bertrand and Soult stood by, with heads uncovered, silent, moody, and anxious. Suddenly the dreamer roused himself for a moment, and spoke abruptly.

"De Marmont!" he said. "Have either of you seen him?"

"Not lately, sire," replied General Bertrand.

"Not since five o'clock, at any rate."

"What was he doing then?"

"He was riding furiously in the direction of Nivelles. I shouted to him. He told me that he was making for Brussels by a circuitous way."

"Ah, that is right! Well done, my brave De Marmont! Braver than his treacherous kinsman ever was! So you saw him, did you, Bertrand? Did he tell you that he had just come from Genappe?"

"Yes, sire, he did," replied Bertrand. "He told me that by your orders he had sent a messenger from there to Paris with news of your victory, and that by to-morrow morning the capital would be ringing with cheers."

"And by the time De Marmont came back from Genappe," interposed the Duke of Dalmatia with a sneer, "the plains of Waterloo were ringing with the Grand Army's '*Sauve qui peut!*'"

"An episode, duke, only an episode!" said Napoleon, with an angry frown of impatience. "We have been beaten back, of course, but for the moment the world does not know that. Paris to-morrow will be beflagged, and the bells of Notre-Dame will send forth their joyous peals to cheer the hearts of my people. And in Brussels this afternoon thousands of our enemies—Belgians, Dutch, and Hanoverians—were rushing helter-skelter into the town, demoralized and disorganized, after that brilliant charge of our cuirassiers against the allies' left."

"Would to Heaven the British had been among them, too!" murmured Bertrand. "But for their stand—"

"Ah, but for that! To think that if Grouchy had kept the Prussians away, in only another hour we—" The dreamer paused in his fancy of the might-have-been. Then he continued more calmly: "But I was not thinking of that just now. I was thinking of those who fled to Brussels this afternoon with the news of our victory and of Wellington's defeat."

"Even so, the truth is known in Brussels by now," protested Soult.

"Yes, but not before De Marmont has had the time and the pluck to save us and our empire. Soult," he continued more vehemently, "don't stand there so gloomy, man—and you, too, Bertrand! Surely, surely you realize that at this terrible juncture we must utilize every circumstance which is in our favor. That early news of our victory—we can make use of that! A big throw in this mighty game, but we can do it. Soult, do you see how we can do it?"

"No, sire, I confess that I do not," replied the marshal gloomily.

"You do not see?" retorted the emperor with a frown of impatience. "De Marmont did, at once; but he is young and enthusiastic,

whereas you— But don't you see that the news of Wellington's defeat must have enormous consequences on the money markets of the world, if only for a few hours? It will send the prices on the foreign bourses tumbling about people's ears, and create an absolute panic on the London Stock Exchange. Only for a few hours, of course; but do you not see that if any man is wise enough to buy stock in London during that panic, he can make a fortune by reselling the moment the truth is known?"

"Even so, sire—" stammered Soult, a little confused by the avalanche of seemingly irrelevant facts hurled at him at a moment when the whole map of Europe was being changed by destiny.

"Ah, De Marmont saw it all, at once," continued the emperor. "He saw eye to eye with me. He knows that money, a great deal of money, is just what I want now—money to reorganize my army, to equip it anew. The chamber and my ministers will never give me what I want—they are such cowards! Some of them would rather see the foreign troops again in Paris than Napoleon emperor at the Tuileries. You should know that, *maréchal*, and you, too, my good Bertrand. De Marmont knows it, and that is why he rode to Brussels at the hour when I alone knew that all was lost at Waterloo, but when half Europe still thought that I had conquered again. De Marmont is in Brussels now. To-night he crosses over to England. To-morrow morning he and his broker will be in the Stock Exchange in London. An operation on the bourse—what? Like hundreds that have been carried through before; but in this case the object will be to turn one million into fifty, so that with it I may rebuild my empire again!"

Desperate as the plan might seem, he spoke with absolute conviction. He sat there quietly, just as he used to sit in his camps in Italy or in Egypt. One clenched hand rested upon the rough deal table; the flickering light of the candle illumined the wide brow, the heavy jaw, the piercing eyes that still gazed, in this hour of supreme catastrophe, into a glorious future destined never to be. He was scheming, planning, scheming still, even while his Grand Army was melting into nothingness all around him, and distant volleys of musketry were consummating the final annihilation of the empire which he had created and still hoped to rebuild.

Soult gave a quick sigh of impatience. Rebuild the empire, when the flower of its manhood lay pale and stark like windrows of

corn after the reaper has done his work! Thoughts of a dreamer! Schemes of a visionary!

The Duke of Dalmatia gave a bitter sigh, and faithful Bertrand hung his head gloomily; but Victor de Marmont had neither sighed nor doubted. De Marmont was young—he, too, was a dreamer and an enthusiast and a visionary. For him this stricken man was his emperor still—the architect, the creator, the invincible conqueror, checked for a moment in his glorious work, but able at will to rebuild his empire on the very ruins that smoldered on the fields of Waterloo.

"I can do it, sire!" he had cried exultantly, when Napoleon first expounded his new scheme. "I can be in Brussels in an hour, and catch the midnight packet for England at Ostend. At dawn I shall be in London, and by ten o'clock at my post. I know a broker—a Jew, and a mightily clever one; he will operate for me. I have a million or two francs invested in England; we'll use these for our operations. Money, sire? You shall have millions! Our profits on the Stock Exchange will equip the finest army that even you have ever had! Fifty millions? I'll bring you a hundred! God has not yet decreed the downfall of the Empire of France!"

So De Marmont had spoken that afternoon, in the enthusiasm of his youth and of his hero-worship; and since then the great dreamer had continued to weave his dreams. Nothing was lost, nothing could be lost, while such enthusiasm survived in the hearts of the young.

And still he sat on, wrapped in his dream, while danger and death and disgrace threatened him on every side. Soult and Bertrand entreated in vain, in vain tried to drag him away from this solitary place, where at any moment a party of Prussians might find and capture him.

Unceremoniously the Duke of Dalmatia had blown out the flickering light that might have attracted the attention of the pursuers. It was a very elementary precaution, the only one he or Bertrand were able to take. But the dreamer still sat on in the gloom, with the pale light of the moon streaming in through the narrow casement and illumining that marble-like face, rigid and set, which seemed only to live by the glowing eyes—the eyes that looked into the future and the past and heeded not the awful present.

At last, suddenly, he jumped to his feet, with a cry of "To Genappe!"

Soult heaved a sigh of relief. Bertrand hurried out to unfasten the horses.

"You are impatient, marshal," said the emperor, almost gaily, as he strode with a firm step to the door. "You are afraid those cursed Prussians will put the Corsican ogre into a cage and send him to King Louis XVIII. Not so, my good Soult, not so! The star of my destiny has not yet set. I've done all the thinking I wanted to do. Now we'll to Genappe, where we'll rally the remnants of our army and then quietly await De Marmont's return with the millions which we want. After that we'll boldly on to Paris and defy my enemies there. *En avant, maréchal!*"

Outside, Bertrand was holding his stirrup for him. He swung himself lightly into the saddle and turned out of the farmyard gate into the open, throwing back his head and sniffing the air as if he was about to lead his army to one of his victorious charges. Not waiting to see how closely the other two men followed him, he put his horse at a gallop.

He rode on, never pausing, never looking round, forgetting that on these billowing fields thirty thousand gallant Frenchmen had fallen for the sake of his dreams.

Bertrand and the Duke of Dalmatia followed, gloomy and silent. They knew that all suggestions would be useless, all saner advice would remain unheeded. Besides, De Marmont had already gone; and, after all, what did it all matter? What did anything matter, now that empire, glory, hope, everything was irretrievably lost?

And in faithful Bertrand's deep-set eyes there came a strange, far-off look, almost of premonition, as if in his mind he could already see that lonely island in the Atlantic and the great gambler there, eating out his heart with vain and bitter regrets.

But De Marmont had never had any doubts, never any forebodings. He had boundless faith in his hero and boundless enthusiasm for his cause. Accustomed to handle money since early manhood, owner of a fortune which he had administered with no mean skill, he believed that the emperor's scheme for manufacturing millions in a wild gamble on the Stock Exchange was not only feasible but certain of success.

Undoubtedly the false news of Wellington's defeat would reach London to-morrow, as it had already reached Paris and Brussels. A panic in the market was a foregone conclusion; a quick rise in prices when the truth became known was equally certain. It only meant forestalling the arrival of Wellington's despatches in London by twenty-four hours, and

by skilful operations one million might make fifty during that time.

As De Marmont had told the emperor, he had a large sum invested in England, on which he could lay his hands. Operations on the exchanges were nothing new to him; and already, while he was still listening with respect and enthusiasm to Napoleon's instructions, he was longing to get away. He knew the country between here and Brussels, and he was eager to be at work.

He would steal the uniform of some poor dead wretch—a Belgian, a Hanoverian, or a black Brunswicker, he didn't care which. It wouldn't take long to strip the dead, and the greatness of the issue at stake would justify the sacrilege. So disguised, he could safely continue his journey to Brussels, and with luck could reach the city before sunset.

In Brussels he would at once obtain civilian clothes, and then catch the night packet for England at Ostend. It was not likely that Wellington could prepare his despatches and send a messenger over to London so soon. At this hour the British commander was still under the elm-tree on Mont Saint-Jean, and the battle was not yet finally won and lost.

De Marmont effected the gruesome exchange without difficulty, and donned the black uniform of a Brunswick regiment wherein many French royalists were serving. By a wide détour he reached the approach to Brussels. Indeed, it seemed as if the news which he had sent flying to Paris was true, after all. Behind the forest of Soignes, where he now was, men were flying, unpursued yet panic-stricken, toward Brussels, carrying tidings of an awful disaster to the allied armies, in their haggard faces, their quivering lips, their blood-stained tunics.

De Marmont joined in with them. Though his heart was full of hope, he, too, contrived to look pale and spent and panic-stricken. He heard the shouts of terror, as horses maddened with fright bore their riders by. He set his teeth and rode on, his dark eyes glowing with satisfaction. There was no fear that the great gambler would stake his last in vain; the news would travel quick enough, as news of disaster always will. Brussels even now must be full of weeping women and children, as it soon would be of terror-driven men, of wounded and of maimed crawling into the shelter of the town to die in peace.

And as he rode, De Marmont thought more and more of Crystal. The last three months had only enhanced his passionate love for her and his maddening desire to win her yet at all

costs. Saint-Genis, of course, would be fighting to-day. Perchance a convenient shot would put him effectually out of the way. De Marmont had vainly tried in this wild gallopade to distinguish his rival's face among the mass of foreigners.

As for Clyffurde, no doubt he had long ago disappeared out of Crystal de Cambray's life. De Marmont had never feared him greatly. Indeed, the Englishman was an entirely negligible quantity.

There was only Saint-Genis; and with the royalist cause rendered absolutely hopeless—as it would be, as it *must* be—Saint-Genis and the Comte de Cambray, and all those stiff-necked aristocrats of the old régime who had thought fit to turn their proud backs on him at Brestalou three months ago, would be irretrievably ruined and discredited, and would have to fly the country once more. Faced with the alternative of penury in England or a brilliant existence at the Tuileries as the wife of the emperor's most faithful friend, Crystal would make her choice as Victor de Marmont never doubted that any woman would.

Hope, for him, had already become reality. Brussels was the half-way halt to the uttermost heights of his ambition. Fortune, the emperor's gratitude, the woman he loved—all waited for him there.

He reached the city just as the distant horizon in the west was lit up by a streak of brilliant crimson from the fast-sinking sun; just when, had he but known it, on the crest of Mont Saint-Jean Wellington waved his plumed hat over his head and gave the heroic British army the order for a charge; just when the Grand Army, finally checked in its advance, had first set up the ominous call that was like the passing-bell of its dying glory:

"Sauve qui peut!"

"Sauve qui peut!"

Bobby Clyffurde heard the cry, too, through the fast-gathering shadows of unconsciousness that closed in upon his wearied senses. A film that was like the kindly veil of approaching death spread over his eyes, as he raised them just once to that vivid crimson glow far out in the west. On the winged chariot of the setting sun he sent up his last sigh of gratitude to God. All day he had called for death—all day he had wooed it there where bullets and grape-shot were thickest, where the huge scythe of the dark reaper had been most busily at work.

Sons of fond mothers, husbands, sweethearts that were dearly loved, brothers that would

be endlessly mourned, lives that were more precious than any earthly treasures—the ghostly harvester claimed them all with impartial cruelty. But he, a desolate and lonely man, with no one greatly to care whether he came back or not, with not a single golden thread of hope to which he might cling, without a dream to brighten the coming days of dreariness—he had sought death twenty times to-day and it had resolutely passed him by.

But now he was thankful that he had lived just long enough to see the sunset, just long enough to take part in that last glorious charge. He was glad to have lived just long enough to hear the "*Sauve qui peut!*"—to know that the Grand Army was in full retreat, that Blücher had come up in time, that British pluck and endurance had won the greatest victory of all time for Britain's flag. With a rough bandage hastily tied round his head where grape-shot had lacerated cheek and ear, with a bayonet-thrust in the thigh and another in the arm, Clyffurde lay there in the down-trodden corn, with thousands round him as silent and uncomplaining as he. The tramp of galloping horses, the clash of steel, the fusillade of tirailleurs and artillery, reached his dimmed senses like a distant echo from the land of ghosts.

Before his eyes, half veiled in unconsciousness, there flitted the tender, delicate vision of Crystal de Cambray; of her blue eyes and soft, fair hair, done up in a quaint mass of tiny curls; of the scarf of filmy lace which she always liked to wrap round her shoulders, and through the lace the pearly sheen of her arms and throat. The air around him had become pure and rarified; the horrible stench of powder and smoke and blood no longer struck his nostrils. There were roses, roses all around him—crimson roses, sweet and caressing and fragrant, with soft, velvety petals that brushed against his cheek. From somewhere close by came a dreamy melody, the half-sad, half-gay lilt of an intoxicating dance.

Wearied, sore, and aching in body, Clyffurde felt his soul lifted to some exquisite heights which were not yet heaven, of course, but which must of a truth form the very threshold of paradise.

He saw Crystal more and more clearly every moment. Now he was looking straight into her blue eyes, and her hand, cool and white as snow, rested upon his burning forehead. She smiled on him as on a friend. There was no contempt, no harshness, in her look—only a great, consoling pity and something that seemed like an appeal.

Yes, the longer he looked into those blue eyes of hers, the more sure he was that there was an appeal in them. It seemed that she needed him as she had never needed him before. Apparently she could not speak; she could not tell him what it was she wanted; but her hands seemed to draw him up out of the trodden, trampled corn. Having soothed his aches and pains, they seemed to impel him to do something for her sake—something important and imperative, something that she urgently wanted done.

He begged her to let him lie here in peace, for he was comforted and happy. He was quite sure now that he was dead, that her sweet face had been the last tangible vision which he had seen on earth ere he closed his eyes in the long sleep.

Then, of a sudden, she had vanished, and darkness was closing in around him. The scent of roses faded into the air, which was filled again with horrid sounds—the deafening roar of cannon, the sharp and incessant retort of rifle-fire, the awesome *mêlée* of cries and groans and bugle-calls and sighs of agony, and one cry, like the last wail of a departing soul, which came from somewhere not far away:

"*Vive l'empereur!*"

Clyffurde raised himself to a sitting posture. His head ached terribly; he was stiff in every limb. A burning pain gnawed at his thigh and at his left arm; but consciousness had returned, and with it the knowledge of what this day had meant. All round him there was the broken corn, stained with blood and mud; all round him lay the dead and the dying in their thousands. Far away in the west a crimson glow like fire lit up this vast hecatomb of brave lives sacrificed, this final agony of Napoleon's empire, the might and grandeur of one man laid low by the mightier hand of God.

It lit up with the weird light of the dying day the pallid, clean-shaven faces of gallant British boys, the rugged face of the Scot, the olive skin of the child of Provence, the bronzed cheeks of old veterans. It threw its lurid glow on red coats and black coats, on white facings and gilt epaulets. It drew sparks as of fire from breastplates and broken swords, discarded helmets and bayonets, sabretaches and kilts and bugles and drums, dead horses and dead and dying men, all lying pell-mell in a huge litter with the glow of midsummer sunset upon them. All these poor little chessmen—pawns and knights, castles of strength and kings of some lonely, mourning hearts—had been swept together by the almighty hand of the Great Master of this terrestrial game.

With returning consciousness Clyffurde's gaze took in a wider range of vision. He visualized exactly where he was—on the south slope of Mont Saint-Jean, with La Haye Sainte on ahead a little to his left, and the whitewashed walls of La Belle Alliance still farther away, gleaming in the light of the setting sun.

He saw that on the wide road which leads to Genappe and Charleroi the once invincible cavalry of the mighty emperor was fleeing helter-skelter from the scene of its disaster. He saw that the British—what was left of them—were in hot pursuit. Over to the left he could make out the scintillating casques of Blücher's Prussians.

Not far away, a detachment of allied troops—Dutch, Belgians, and Brunswickers—had just started down the slope of the plateau to join in this deadly welter, where, amid the litter of dead and dying, in the confusion of pursuer and pursued, comrade fought at times against comrade, brother fired on brother, Prussian against British.

Down below, behind the farm buildings of La Haye Sainte a few companies of chasseurs of the Old Guard had made a stand around a tattered bit of tricolor and the bronze eagle—symbol of so much decadent grandeur and of such undying glory.

"*À moi, chasseurs!*" brave General Pelet had cried. "Let us save the eagle or die beneath its wing!"

Those who heard this last call of despair stopped in their headlong flight. They forged a way for themselves through the mass of running horses and men, they rallied to their flag, and with their tirailleurs—kneeling on one knee—ranged in a circle round them, they formed around their eagle a living bulwark of dauntless breasts and bristling bayonets.

Upon this body of desperate men the Dutch and Belgian and German troops hurled themselves with wild huzzas. Against this small but solid mass of heroes—conquerors in a dozen victorious campaigns, men who had no longer anything to lose but life, and to whom life meant less than nothing now—against them rushed a disorganized handful of half-trained recruits, drunk with the vision of glory which awaited them if they could bring to earth that defiant eagle.

As Bobby staggered to his feet he saw the impetuous and disorderly charge, and noted that most of those who took part in it were Brunswickers. The full brilliance of the evening glow was upon their black coats with silver galloons and tassels. Two of their officers

had made a brave show in Brussels last evening—or was it a hundred years ago?—at the Duchesse of Richmond's ball. Bobby remembered them well, for one of these two officers was Maurice de Saint-Genis.

How Crystal de Cambray would love to see him now, even though her heart would be torn with anxiety for him! He was fighting bravely—bravely and desperately, as every one had fought to-day, as these chasseurs of the Old Guard were still fighting round that tattered flag and that bronze eagle, with the cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*" dying upon their lips.

As he steadied himself on his feet, Clyffurde saw that the attack on General Pelet's detachment was failing. The French guardsmen not only held the Dutch and Brunswickers at bay, but were defeating them and driving them back, even while all around them their allies, British and Prussian, were crying:

"Victory!"

Clyffurde saw the danger which threatened that handful of black-coated men, one of whose officers was named Saint-Genis. He saw the first sign of wavering, of stupefaction, that followed the impetuous charge. He saw the gaps in the ranks torn by the deadly volleys of the French tirailleurs. He saw the assailants recoiling in disorder before the bayonets of the chasseurs. He saw that they were in danger of nothing less than annihilation.

All around Clyffurde was death, but there was some life, too. One or two abandoned, riderless horses were quietly picking bits of corn from between the piles of dead and dying men, or were standing, sniffing the air with dilated nostrils, and snorting with terror at the deafening noise. Clyffurde had steadied himself. Neither his head nor his limbs were aching now; or, at any rate, he had forgotten them. All that he remembered was what he saw—the black-coated Brunswickers being slaughtered before the last fierce rally of the French guardsmen.

He caught the bridle of one of the abandoned horses, and crawled up into the saddle. His thigh was numb, and one of his arms helpless; but once on horseback he could get along—over trampled corn, and over the dead—on toward that hideous corner behind the farm of La Haye Sainte, where desperate men were butchering others that were as desperate as they. He plunged in among that seething crowd of black coats and fur bonnets, of silver tassels and of brass eagles, into a whirlpool of swords and bayonets and gun-fire from the tirailleurs; for there in the deadly mêlée he had seen the man whom Crystal loved, for

whose sake she would eat out her heart with mourning and regret.

He had seen Saint-Genis fall to his knees in front of the steel wall of bayonets. Maurice had thrown back his head in the hopelessness of his despair. The evening sun fell full upon his haggard, blood-stained face, upon his wide-open eyes filled with the terror of death.

The next moment Clyffurde was by his side. All around him bullets were whizzing, all around him men sighed their last sigh of agony. He stooped over his saddle.

"Can you pull yourself up?" he called.

With his one sound arm he caught Maurice by the elbow and helped him to struggle to his feet. The horse, dazed with terror, snorted at the smell of blood, but he did not move. Maurice, equally dazed, scrambled into the saddle. He was almost inert, a dead weight, a thing that impeded progress and movement; but he was the thing that Crystal de Cambray loved above all things on earth. Clyffurde knew that he must wrest him out of the devouring jaws of death and lay him safe and sound within the shelter of her arms.

After that it meant a struggle—not for his own life, for, indeed, he cared little enough for that—but for the sake of the burden which he was carrying, and with which Crystal's heart and happiness were bound up.

Maurice de Saint-Genis clung to him, with one hand gripping the saddle-bow, the other clutching Clyffurde's belt with convulsive tenacity. Bobby himself was only half-conscious, dazed with the pain of wounds, the exertion of hoisting that dead-weight across his saddle, with the deafening noise of whizzing bullets round him, with the boring of the frightened horse against its bridle, as it tried to pick its way through the tangled heaps upon the ground.

But every moment lessened the danger of stray bullets. Clyffurde was able to guide his horse away from the spots where the fighting was still fierce, where Vivian's hussars came charging down to sweep away Pelet's remnant of the Old Guard. He rode up the plateau, but well to the right, picking his way carefully with that blind instinct which the tracked beast possesses, and which the hunted man sometimes receives from God.

The dead and the dying were less thick upon the ground here. It was here that Hacke's hussars had broken their ranks and fled, earlier in the day, taking to Brussels and thence to Ghent the news of terrific disaster. Clyffurde's lips were tight set when he thought of that—when he thought of the misery and sorrow that

must be reigning in Brussels now, and of the consternation at Ghent, where the poor old Bourbon king was probably mourning his dead hopes and his vanished throne.

In Brussels women would be weeping. Crystal, forlorn and desolate, would perhaps be sitting at her window, watching the stream of fugitives that came in, wounded and exhausted, from the field of battle, recounting tales of catastrophe. Seeing and hearing this, she would think of the man she loved and, believing him to be dead, would break her heart with sorrow.

And when Clyffurde thought of that he was spurred to fresh effort. He pulled himself together with a desperate tension of every nerve and sinew, fighting exhaustion, ignoring pain, conjuring up the vision of Crystal's blue eyes and her pleading look as she begged him to save her from lifelong sorrow and the anguish of future loneliness. He no longer heard the incessant cannonade, he no longer saw the desolation of this utter confusion around him, he no longer felt exhausted or noticed the weight of that lifeless, impeding burden upon his saddle-bow.

Reaching the crest of Mont Saint-Jean, he struck back eastward in the direction of the forest of Soignes. It was blind instinct, and nothing more, that kept him on his horse. He clung to his saddle with half-paralyzed knees, as a drowning man will clutch a floating bit of wreckage that helps him to keep his head above the water. Through the forest, any track that bore to the left would strike the Brussels road. Only a little more strength, another effort or two, and the cool solitude of the wood would ease the throbbing of nerves and brain.

Maurice had not yet wakened from his trance, and Clyffurde vaguely wondered if he were not already dead. There was no stain of blood upon his uniform, but it was possible that in stumbling and falling he had hit his head or received a blow which had deprived him of consciousness directly after he had scrambled into the saddle.

Clyffurde remembered how pale and haggard he had looked, and how his hand had clutched at the saddle-bow and then dropped away from it, helpless and inert. Now he lay quite still, with his head resting against his rescuer's shoulder.

Under the trees it was cool, and the air was sweet and soothing. With his left hand Clyffurde contrived to tear a handful of leaves from the coppice as he passed. They were full of moisture, and he pressed them against Maurice's lips and against his own.

The forest was full of sounds—of running men and horses, the rattle of wheels, and calls of terror and of pain, with still that awesome background of persistent cannonade. But Clyffurde heard nothing, saw nothing, save the narrow track in front of him, and from time to time, when he looked down, the pale, haggard face of the man whom Crystal de Cambray loved.

At length Maurice opened his eyes and murmured feebly:

"Where am I?"

"On the way to Brussels," Clyffurde contrived to reply.

A little later on horse and rider emerged from the wood, and the Brussels road stretched out its long, straight ribbon before Clyffurde's dull, uncomprehending gaze.

Close by at his feet a mile-stone marked the last six kilometers to Brussels. Only another half-dozen kilometers—only another half-hour's ride! Only that, when even now he felt that the next few minutes must see him tumbling head foremost from the saddle.

At the edge of the wood Clyffurde drew rein to give his horse a brief rest, and for a while he watched the stream of fugitives and wounded men that still poured intermittently along the road. Presently he chanced to notice among those who passed a man in the same uniform that Saint-Genis was wearing—a Brunswicker in black coat and silver galloons—who stared at him, persistently and strangely, as he rode by.

The man's face, though much altered by three days' growth of beard, and by the set of the shako worn right down to the brows, was nevertheless a familiar one. Clyffurde, half stupefied, deprived of thinking power through sheer exhaustion and burning pain, taxed his weary brain in vain to understand the look of recognition which the Brunswicker cast upon him as he passed; until a lightly spoken: "Hello, my dear Clyffurde!" uttered gaily as the rider drew near to the edge of the road, brought the name of "Victor de Marmont!" to Bobby's quivering lips.

For the space of sixty seconds Fate rubbed her gaunt hands complacently together, seeing that she had brought these three men together—three men who loved the same woman, each with the utmost ardor and passion at his command; who even at this moment were striving to win her or to work for her happiness.

Behind them, on the plains of Waterloo, the cannon still were roaring. De Marmont was on his way to redeem the fallen fortunes of the hero whom he worshiped, and win imperial

regard, imperial favors, fortune, and glory, wherewith to conquer a girl's obstinacy.

Saint-Genis, pale and unconscious, seemed even in his unconsciousness to defy the power of any rival by the might of early love, of old associations, of similarity of caste and of political ideals. He had fought for the cause which both she and he had equally at heart; and by his very helplessness he seemed to prove that he could do no more than he had done, and that he had a right to claim the solace and comfort which her girlish lips and her girlish love had promised him long ago.

Clyffurde had nothing to promise and nothing to give save devotion. His hope, his desire, and his love were bounded by her happiness; and since her happiness lay in the life of the man whom he had dragged out of the jaws of death, what greater proof could he give of his love than to lay down his own life for him and for her?

De Marmont's keen eyes took in the situation at a glance. He threw a quick look of savage hatred on Saint-Genis, and cast one of contemptuous pity on Clyffurde. Then, with a shrug of the shoulders and a light, triumphant laugh, he set spurs to his horse and rode swiftly away.

Clyffurde's lack-luster eyes followed horse and rider down the road, till they finally disappeared in the distance. For a moment he felt puzzled. What was De Marmont doing here? What was he doing in the uniform of one of the allied nations. Why had he laughed so gaily and appeared so triumphant in his mien?

Did he not know then that his hero had fallen, along with his mighty eagle? That the adventure begun in the Gulf of Juan had ended in a hopeless tragedy on the field of Waterloo? And why that uniform? Poor Bobby's head ached too much to allow him to think, and time was getting on.

Maurice opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he asked again.

"Close to Brussels now," replied Bobby.

"To Brussels?" murmured Saint-Genis feebly. "Crystal!"

"Yes," assented Bobby. "Crystal, God bless her!" Then, as Saint-Genis was trying to move, he added: "Can you shift a little?"

"I think so," replied the other.

"If you could ease the pressure on my leg—steady now! Can you sit up in the saddle? Are you hurt?"

"Not much. My head aches terribly. I must have hit it against something; but that is all. I am only dizzy and sick."

"Could you ride on to Brussels alone?"

"Perhaps."

"It is not far. The horse is very quiet. He will amble along if you give him his head."

"But you?"

"I'd like to rest. I'll find shelter in a cottage, perhaps, or in the wood."

Saint-Genis said nothing more for the moment. He was intent on sliding down from the saddle without too much assistance from Clyffurde. When he had reached the ground, it took him a little while to collect himself, for his head was swimming. He closed his eyes and put out a hand to steady himself against a tree.

When Maurice opened his eyes again, Clyffurde was sitting on the ground by the roadside; the horse was nibbling a clump of grass. With a stained bandage round his head, with dulled and bloodshot eyes, his face blackened with powder and smoke, his features drawn and haggard, Clyffurde was indeed almost unrecognizable; but Maurice knew him on the instant. Hitherto he had not thought of how he had come out of that terrible slaughter behind La Haye Sainte. He had lost consciousness from sheer exhaustion, and had not regained it till now; but now he knew that the same man, who in the little inn near Lyons had ungrudgingly rendered him a signal service, had to-day risked his life for Maurice's sake.

No one could have entered that terrible mêlée and faced the bayonets of Pelet's chasseurs and the hail of bullets from their tirailleurs without taking imminent risk of death; yet Clyffurde had done it. Why? Maurice, wide-eyed and sullen, could find only one answer to that insistent question.

That same deadly pang of jealousy which had assailed his heart after the midnight interview at the inn now held him in its cruel grip again. He felt that he hated the man to whom he owed his life, and that he hated himself for this base ingratitude. He would not trust himself to speak, or to look at Clyffurde, lest the ugly thoughts floating through his mind should set their stamp upon his face.

"Will you not ride on to Brussels?" he said at last. "I can wait here, and perhaps you could send a conveyance for me later on. The Comte de Cambray would—"

"The Comte de Cambray and Mlle. Crystal are even now devoured with anxiety about you," broke in Clyffurde, as firmly as he could. "I could not ride to Brussels, even though some one were waiting for me there. I really am not able to ride farther. I would prefer to sit here and rest."

"I don't like to leave you, after—after what you have done for me. I would like to—"

"I would like you to scramble into that saddle and leave me in peace," returned Clyffurde, with a momentary return to his usual good-natured irony.

"I'll send out a conveyance for you," replied Saint-Genis. "I know the Comte de Cambray would wish—"

"Mention my name to the count at your peril!" said Clyffurde.

"But—"

"By the Lord, man," exclaimed Bobby with a sudden burst of energy, "if you do not go, I vow that, sick as I am, and sick though you may be, I'll manage to punch your head!" Then, as the other reluctantly turned to take hold of the horse's bridle, he added more gently: "Can you mount?"

"Oh, yes; I am better now."

"You won't turn giddy and fall off?"

"I don't think so."

"Talk about the halt leading the blind!" murmured Clyffurde, as he stretched himself out once more upon the soft ground, while Maurice hoisted himself into the saddle. "Are you safe now?" he added, as the young man collected the reins in his hand and planted his feet firmly in the stirrups.

"Yes, I am safe enough," replied Saint-Genis. "It is only my head that aches; and Brussels is not far."

Then he paused a moment ere he started to go. With lips set tight, and looking down on Clyffurde, whose pale face had taken on an ashen hue, he said bitterly:

"How you must despise me!"

Clyffurde made no reply. He was just longing to be left alone, while the other still seemed inclined to linger.

"Would to Heaven," Maurice said with a sigh, "that the Comte de Cambray heard the evil news from other lips than mine!"

"Evil news?" Clyffurde, who was already floating off once more to the land of visions and of dreams, was brought back to reality, as if with a sudden jerk, by those two preposterous little words. "What evil news?" he asked.

"The allied armies have retreated all along the line. The Corsican adventurer is victorious. Our poor king—"

"Hold your tongue, you young fool!" cried Clyffurde hoarsely.

"But—"

"The allies have covered themselves with glory—Napoleon and his empire have ceased to be! The Grand Army is routed—thank God I lived just long enough to see it all!"

"But when we charged the Frenchmen—" began Saint-Genis, not knowing whether Clyffurde was raving in delirium or speaking of what he knew.

The only thing that he remembered with certainty was his charge against Pelet's chasseurs, then the panic and the rout. He judged the whole issue of the battle by what had happened to a detachment of Brunswickers.

He wanted to ask further questions. He longed to make the wounded man rouse himself just once more and reiterate the glad news which would mean so much to himself and to Crystal; but it was useless to think of that now. Clyffurde was either unconscious or asleep.

For a moment a twinge of real pity made Saint-Genis's heart ache for the man left so lonely and so desolate. Jealousy itself gave way before that gentler feeling. After all, Crystal could only be true to the love of her childhood; her heart belonged to the companion, the lover, the ideal of her girlish dreams. This stranger loved her—that was obvious; but Crystal had never looked on him with anything but indifference. Even at the dance last night—but of this Maurice would not think, lest pity should die out of his heart again.

He turned his horse's head round to the road, pressed his knees into its sides, and then, as the weary beast ambled off, Maurice looked back for the last time on the prostrate, pathetic figure of the lonely man who had given his all for him. He noted every landmark which would enable him to find that man again—the angle of the forest where it touched the meadow, the mile-stone, the trees by the roadside. He meant to do his duty, to do it well and quickly, to send the conveyance, to neglect nothing.

Then, with a sigh, half of bitterness yet full of satisfaction, he finally turned away and looked straight out before him into the distance where Brussels lay, where the happiness of Crystal's love called to him, where he would find rest and peace in the warm affection of her faithful heart.

CHAPTER XV

THE LOSING HANDS

AN hour later, Maurice de Saint-Genis was in Brussels. Though his head still ached, his mind was clear, and thoughts of Crystal had driven every other idea away.

His home had been with the Comte de Cam-

bray ever since those old, sad days in England. He had a home to go to now—a home where the count's kindly friendship and Crystal's love were ready to welcome him. The warmth of anticipated happiness warmed his heart and gave strength to his body. The horrors of the past few hours seemed all to have vanished and melted away behind him on the Brussels road, as did the remembrance of a man, wounded himself and spent, risking his life for the sake of a friend.

Not that Saint-Genis meant to be ungrateful. He did not forget that the wounded man lay alone and sick on the fringe of the wood by the roadside. As soon as he had taken his horse to the barracks in the Rue des Comédiens, and before he had a wash or had his uniform cleaned of mud, he hurried to the headquarters of the Army Service, to see how soon a conveyance could be sent out to his rescuer. When he was unable to obtain what he wanted there, he rushed from hospital to hospital, and thence to two or three doctors whom he knew of, to see what could be done.

But the hospitals were already overfull and overbusy; their ambulances were all in use. As for the doctors of Brussels, they were all from home, all at work where their skill was most urgently needed. An army of doctors, of ambulances and drivers, would not suffice at this hour to bring all the wounded in from the field of battle.

Maurice saw time slipping by. He had already spent an hour in a fruitless quest. He longed to see Crystal, and waxed impatient at the delay. At the English hospital a kindly person, who listened sympathetically to his tale, promised him that an ambulance which was just setting out in the direction of Mont Saint-Jean would be on the lookout for his wounded friend by the roadside. Maurice, with a sigh of relief, felt that he had indeed done his duty and done his best.

At the English hospital Clyffurde would be splendidly looked after; nowhere else could he find such sympathetic treatment. So Maurice with a light heart went back to the barracks in the Rue des Comédiens, where he washed himself and had his uniform cleaned. Then, somewhat refreshed, though still very tired, he hurried round to the Rue du Marais, where the Comte de Cambray had his lodgings.

The first sight of Brussels had already told him of the panic and confusion which had filled the city in the wake of the fugitive troops. The streets were encumbered with vehicles of every kind—carts, barouches, barrows—and with horses loosely tethered. Wounded soldiers lay

about on litters of straw along the edges of the pavement, in doorways, under archways, in the center of open places. Crowds of weeping women and crying children wandered aimlessly from place to place, trying to find the loved one who might be lying here, hurt or mayhap dying.

And everywhere men in tattered uniforms, with grimy hands and faces and boots knee-deep in stains of mud, stood about or sat in the empty carts, talking, gesticulating, giving confused and contradictory accounts of the great battle. Most of them told of Napoleon's decisive victory, Wellington's rout, and the defection of Blücher and the Prussians, which had caused the terrible disaster.

The Comte d'Artois had rushed precipitately from Brussels to Ghent to warn his brother, the King of France, that all hope of saving his throne was now at an end, and that the wisest course was to return to England and resign himself once more to obscurity and exile. The Prince de Condé had gone off to Antwerp in a huge barouche, having in his care the treasure and jewels of the crown, hastily collected three months ago at the Tuileries.

In some of the open spaces little groups of prisoners were being guarded by mixed patrols of Dutch, Belgian, or German soldiers. Their cry of "*Vive l'empereur!*" which they reiterated with unshakable obstinacy, roused the ire of their captors, and provoked many a savage blow.

But Saint-Genis did not pause to look on all these sights. He scarcely had the strength to stand up in the midst of the confused masses of terror-driven men and women, and to shout to them that they were fools—that their panic should be turned to joy, their lamentations to shouts of jubilation. News of victory was bound to spread through the city within the next hour, and he himself longed only to see Crystal, to reassure her as to his own safety, to see the light of happiness kindled in her eyes by the news that he brought. He had not the strength for more.

It was old Jeanne who opened the door at the lodgings in the Rue du Marais when Maurice finally rang the bell there.

"*Monsieur le marquis!*" she exclaimed. "Oh, but you are ill!"

"Only very tired and weak, Jeanne," he said. "It has been an awful day."

"Ah, but *monsieur le comte* will be pleased to see you!"

"And Mlle. Crystal?" asked Maurice, with a smile which had in it all the self-confidence of the accepted lover.

"Mlle. Crystal will be happy, too," said Jeanne. "She has been so unhappy, so desperately anxious, all day!"

"Can I see her?"

"*Mademoiselle* is out for the moment, *monsieur le marquis*; and *monsieur le comte* has gone to the Cercle des Légitimistes in the Rue des Cendres. Perhaps *monsieur le marquis* knows the place—it is not far."

"I would like to see Mlle. Crystal first. You understand, don't you, Jeanne?"

"Yes, I do, *monsieur le marquis*," sighed faithful Jeanne, who was always inclined to be sentimental.

"How long will she be, do you think?"

"Oh, another half-hour—perhaps more. *Mademoiselle* has gone to the cathedral. If *monsieur le marquis* will give himself the trouble to walk so far, he cannot fail to see *mademoiselle* when she comes out of church."

But already, before Jeanne had finished speaking, Maurice had turned on his heel and was speeding back down the narrow street. Tired and weak as he was, his one idea was to see Crystal, to hear her voice, to see the love-light in her eyes. He felt that at sight of her all fatigue would be gone, all recollections of the horrors of this day wiped out by the first look of joy and relief with which she would greet him.

The service was over, and the congregation had filed out of the cathedral. Crystal was one of the last to go. She stood for a long while on the porch, looking down with unseeing eyes on the bustle and excitement which went on in the square below. Her mind was not here. It was far, indeed, from the crowd of wounded soldiers, terrified peasantry, and anxious townsfolk that encumbered the precincts of the stately church.

From the remote distance, off toward the south, there still came the boom and roar of cannon. There was her heart, there were her thoughts—with the brave men who were fighting for national existence. She stood here, staring straight out before her, dry-eyed and pale, her small white hands clasped tightly together.

During most of the day she had sat by the open window in the shabby drawing-room in the Rue du Marais, listening to that awful fusillade, wondering which of those cruel shots would still forever the loyal heart that had made so many silent sacrifices for her.

Her father, vaguely thinking that she was anxious about Saint-Genis, vaguely wondering that she cared so much, had done his best to

try and comfort her. She need not fear much for Maurice, he had told her as reassuringly as he could. The Brunswickers were not likely to suffer much. The brunt of the conflict would probably fall upon the British. Wellington had not more than sixty thousand men to put up against Napoleon's hundred thousand, and only a hundred and fifty cannon against two hundred and eighty. Yes, the British would, no doubt, lose heavily, and might be annihilated; the Brunswickers would probably be in reserve, and would come off a great deal better.

The Duchesse d'Agen offered no such consolation. She contented herself with saying that she was sure in her mind that Maurice would come through quite safely, and that she prayed to God with all her heart and soul that the gallant British troops would not suffer too heavily. Then with her fine, gentle hand she patted Crystal's fair curls, which were clinging matted and damp against the young girl's burning forehead; and she stooped and kissed those aching blue eyes and whispered quite under her breath, so that Crystal could not be sure if she heard correctly:

"May God protect him, too! He is a brave and a good man!"

And then Crystal had gone out to seek peace and rest in beautiful old Sainte-Gudule, so full of memories of other conflicts, other prayers, other deeds of heroism of long ago. Here, in the dim light and the silence and the peace, her quivering nerves had become somewhat stilled. When she came out of the great church, she was able, for the moment, neither to see nor to hear the terror-mongers down below, and only to think of the heroes out there on the field of battle, for whom she had been praying with such passionate earnestness.

Suddenly, in the crowd, she recognized Maurice. He was coming up the cathedral steps, looking for her, no doubt; Jeanne must have directed him. When he drew near to her, he saw that a look of happy surprise and of true joy lit up the delicate pathos of her face.

He ran quickly to her, and would have taken her in his arms; but there was something in her manner which instinctively sobered him. He had to be content with the little cold hands which she held out to him, and with imprinting a kiss upon her finger-tips.

Already in his eyes she had read that the news which he brought was not so bad as rumor had foretold.

"Maurice," she cried excitedly, with a little catch in her throat, "you are well and safe, thank God! And what news?"

"The news is good," Maurice replied. "Victory is assured by now. It has been a hard day, but we have won."

She said nothing for a moment, but the tears gathered in her eyes, her lips quivered, and Maurice knew that she was thanking God. Then she turned back to him, and he could see her face glowing with excitement.

"And our allies?" she asked, and now that little catch in her throat was more marked. "The British troops? We heard that they behaved like heroes, and bore the brunt of this awful battle."

"I don't know much about the British troops, my sweet," he replied lightly; "but what news I have I will have to impart to your father as well as to you. It will keep until I see him. Just now, Crystal, while we are alone, I have other things to say to you."

But it is doubtful if Crystal heard more than just the first words which he had spoken.

"You don't know about the British troops, Maurice? Oh, but you must know! Don't you know what British regiments were engaged?"

"Are you not content for the moment, Crystal," he said with tender reproach, "to know that victory has crowned our king and his allies, and that I have come back to you safely?"

He spoke more vehemently now, for there was something in Crystal's attitude which had begun to chill him. Had he not been in deadly danger all the day? Had she not heard the distant roar of the guns which had threatened his life throughout all these hours? Had he not come back out of the very jaws of death?

And yet here she stood, as white as a lily, and as unruffled. Except for that one first exclamation of joy, not a single cry from the heart had forced itself through her pale, slightly trembling lips. Yet she was sweet and girlish and tender as of old, and even now, at the implied reproach, her eyes had quickly filled with tears.

"How can you ask, Maurice?" she protested gently. "I have thought of you and prayed for you all day."

It was her quiet serenity that disconcerted him. The kindly tone of her voice, her calm, unembarrassed manner, checked his passionate impulse and caused him to bite his under lip with vexation.

The shadows of evening were closing in around them. From the windows of the nearby houses dim, yellow lights began to blink. Overhead the exquisite towers of Sainte-Gudule stood out against the stormy sky like delicate lace work turned to stone. The glass of the

west window glittered like a sheet of sapphires and emeralds and rubies, as it caught the last glow of the sunset. Crystal's graceful figure stood out in its white summer draperies, clear and crystalline as herself, against the somber background of the cathedral porch.

Maurice watched her through the dim shadows of gathering twilight. He watched her as a fowler watches the bird which he has captured and never wholly tamed. Somehow he felt that her love for him was not what it had been. She was no longer the same girlish, submissive creature on whose soft cheeks a word or look from him had the power to raise a flush of joy. She was different now, in a curious, intangible way which he could not define.

Suddenly jealousy reared up its threatening head more insistently—bitter jealousy which embraced De Marmont, Clyffurde, fate, and circumstance; but Clyffurde above all. Hitherto the English stranger had been deemed of no account, but now—wounded, abandoned, dying, perhaps—he seemed a more formidable rival than Maurice had ever thought possible.

Saint-Genis cursed himself for that touch of sentiment—he called it cowardice—which last night, after the ball, had prompted him to write to Crystal. But for that voluntary confession, he thought, she could never have despised him. And following up the train of his own thoughts, and realizing that these had not been spoken aloud, he said abruptly:

"Is it because of my letter, Crystal?"

She gave a start, and turned even paler than she had been before. Obviously she had been brought roughly back from the land of dreams.

"Your letter, Maurice?" she asked vaguely.

"What do you mean?"

"I wrote you a letter last night," he continued, speaking quickly and harshly. "Did you receive it?"

"Yes."

"And read it?"

"Of course."

"And is it because of it that your love for me has gone?"

He had not meant to put his horrible suspicion into words. Now that he had spoken, the very fact appeared more tangible, more irremediable.

As she did not reply to his taunt, he came a little closer to her and took her hand. When she tried to withdraw it from his grasp, he held it tightly, and bent down his head so that in the gathering gloom he could read every line of her face.

"Because of what I told you in my letter you despised me, did you not?" he asked.

Again she made no reply. What could she say that would not hurt him far more than did her silence?

The next moment he had drawn her back into the shadow of the cathedral walls, into a dark angle where no one could see either her or him. He placed his hands upon her shoulders and compelled her to look him straight in the face.

"Listen, Crystal," he said slowly and with desperate earnestness. "Once, long ago, I gave you up to De Marmont. It all but broke my heart, but I did it because your father demanded that sacrifice from you and from me. I was ready, then, to stand aside and to give up the dreams of my youth; but now everything is different. I will not give you up—I will not! My way is clear; I can win you with your father's consent, and give him and you all that De Marmont promised. The king trusts me and will give me what I ask. I am no longer a wastrel, no longer poor and obscure. I will not give you up, even if I have to kill with my own hand every one who stands in my way!"

Smiling quite kindly and a little abstractedly at his impulsive earnestness, Crystal gently removed his hands from her shoulders and said calmly:

"You are tired, Maurice, and overwrought. Shall we go in and wait for father? He will be getting anxious about me."

And without waiting to see if he followed her, she turned to walk toward the steps.

Saint-Genis smothered an oath, but he said nothing more. He was satisfied with what he had done. He knew that women liked a masterful man, and he meant every word he said. He would not give her up—not now, and not to—

Ye gods, he would not think of that! He would not think of the lonely roadside, or of the wounded man who had robbed him of Crystal's love. He had done his duty by Clyffurde—what more could he have done at this hour? He meant to do still more. He meant to go back to the English hospital as soon as possible, to see that Clyffurde had every attention that human sympathy can bestow. What more could he do?

He would have done no good by going out with the ambulance himself. He would have missed seeing Crystal, and she would have been terribly anxious. His first duty was to her.

Having lulled his conscience to sleep and satisfied his self-love, he followed Crystal down

the steps before the west front of Sainte-Gudule. Immediately opposite them, at the corner of the narrow Rue de Ligne, was the old Auberge des Trois Rois, from which the diligence started twice a day in time to catch the English packet at Ostend. Maurice and Crystal stood for a moment together on the steps watching the bustle and excitement, the comings and goings of the crowd that always attends such departures.

Victor de Marmont had secured a place inside the coach. He had exchanged his borrowed uniform for civilian clothes, had bestowed his belongings in the vehicle, and was standing near it, waiting for the hour of departure. The diligence would not arrive at Ostend till five o'clock in the morning; then, with the tide, the packet would go out, getting into London well after midday.

Chance, as represented by the tide, had come near to wrecking De Marmont's plans; but enthusiasm and doggedness of purpose whispered to him that he still held the winning cards. The English packet was timed to arrive in London by two o'clock in the afternoon, and he would have two hours left before closing time on the Exchange. If it took him half an hour to get there, and half an hour to find his broker, there would still be an hour wherein to make a great fortune for his emperor.

At one time he was afraid that he would not be able to secure a seat in the diligence, so numerous were the travelers who wished to leave Brussels behind them; but here, chance and the length of his purse favored him. He bought his seat for an exorbitant price, but he bought it; and at nine o'clock the diligence was to start.

It was now half past eight; and just then De Marmont caught sight of Crystal and Saint-Genis coming down the cathedral steps.

He had half an hour to spare, and he followed them. He wished to speak to Crystal. He would have sought for her, but the difficulty of getting what clothes he required, and the trouble and time spent in bargaining for a seat in the diligence, had stood in his way. The Comte de Cambray, of course, would never again admit him inside his door, and it would have meant hanging about in the Rue du Marais and trusting to a chance meeting with Crystal when she went out; and for this he had not sufficient time.

The chance meeting had come about, however, in spite of all adverse circumstances; and he followed Crystal through the crowded streets, hoping that Saint-Genis would take

leave of her before she went indoors. Even if he did not, De Marmont meant to have a few words with Crystal.

He was going to win a gigantic fortune for the emperor—one wherewith that greatest of all adventurers could once again create an empire. He himself, rich already, would become richer still, and one of the most trusted, most influential men in France. And his ambition had always been bound up in great measure with Crystal de Cambray. He loved her, in his way, for her beauty and her charm; but above all he looked on her as the very personification of the old and proud régime which had thought fit to scorn the parvenu noblesse of the empire. For a powerful adherent of Napoleon to be possessed of a wife out of that exclusive *milieu* was like a fresh and glorious trophy of war on a conqueror's chariot-wheel.

De Marmont had the supreme faith of an ambitious man in the power of wealth and of court favor. He knew that Napoleon would not forget a service efficiently rendered, and would repay this one, rendered at the supreme hour of disaster, with gifts and honors which must perforce dazzle any woman's eyes and conquer her imagination.

Beside his schemes, his ambitions, the future which awaited him, what had an impecunious wastrel like Saint-Genis to offer to a woman like Crystal de Cambray?

Outside the house in the Rue du Marais, Saint-Genis and Crystal paused. De Marmont, who still kept within the shadows, waited for a favorable opportunity to make his presence known.

"I'll find the count and bring him back with me," he heard Saint-Genis saying. "You are sure I shall find him at the *Légitimiste*?"

"Quite sure," Crystal replied. "He did not mean to leave till about nine. He is sure to wait for every bit of news that comes in."

"It will be a great moment for me, if I am the first to bring in authentic good news."

"You will be quite the first, I should say," she assented; "but don't let father stay too long talking. Bring him back quickly. Remember, I haven't heard all the news yet myself."

Saint-Genis went up to the front door and rang the bell; then he took leave of Crystal, and walked quickly back down the street.

Crystal paused a moment by the open door in order to talk to Jeanne; and while she did so, De Marmont slipped quickly past her into the house. He was some distance down the corridor before the two women recovered from

their surprise. Jeanne, as was her wont, was ready to scream, but despite the fast-gathering gloom Crystal had at once recognized De Marmont. She turned a cold look upon him.

"An intrusion, *monsieur*?" she asked quietly.

"We'll call it that, *mademoiselle*, if you will," he replied imperturbably. "If you will kindly order your servant to go, it shall be a very brief one."

"My father is from home," she said.

"I know that, or I should not be here," returned De Marmont, smiling and shrugging his shoulders.

"Then, M. de Marmont, your intrusion here is that of a coward, if you knew that I was unprotected!"

"Are you afraid of me, Crystal?"

"I am afraid of no one," she replied; "but since you and I have nothing to say to each other, I beg that you will no longer force your company upon me."

"Your pardon, but I have something very important to say to you. I have news of to-day's doings out there at Waterloo, which bear upon the whole of your future and upon your happiness. I myself leave for England in less than half an hour. I was taking my place in the diligence outside the Trois Rois when I saw you coming down the cathedral steps. Fate has given me an opportunity for which I sought vainly all day. You will never regret it, Crystal, if you listen to me now."

"I listen," she broke in coolly. "I pray you be as brief as you can."

"Will you order the servant to go?"

For a moment she hesitated. Common sense told her that it was neither prudent nor expedient to hold converse with this man, an avowed and bitter enemy of her cause; but he had spoken of the doings at Waterloo, and had spoken of them in connection with her own future and her happiness. Prudent or not, she longed to hear what he had to say, in the vague hope that from some chance word she might learn that on which Saint-Genis would not dwell, but on which hung her heart and her very life—the fate of the British troops.

"You may go, Jeanne," she said; "but remain within call. Leave the front door open," she added. "*Monsieur le comte* and *monsieur le marquis* will be here directly."

"Oh, you are well protected," said Victor de Marmont with a careless shrug of the shoulders, as Jeanne's heavy, shuffling footsteps died away down the corridor.

"Now, M. de Marmont," said Crystal, "I listen."

She was leaning back against the wall, her hands behind her, her pale face and large blue eyes turned questioningly upon him. De Marmont, like Saint-Genis not long before, felt that never had this beautiful woman—she was no longer a girl now—looked more exquisite and more desirable. Conscious of the power which fortune and success can give, he thought that he could woo and win her once again, in spite of political hatred and the prejudices of caste.

Saint-Genis had felt his position unassailable by virtue of old associations, common sympathies, and youthful vows. De Marmont relied on feminine ambition, love of power, of wealth, and of station. In Crystal's shining eyes he only read excitement and the unspoken desire for all that he was prepared to offer.

"I have only a few moments to spare, Crystal," he said slowly and with earnest emphasis, "so I will be very brief. For the moment, the emperor has suffered a defeat—as he did at Essling or at Eylau. His defeats are always momentary, his victories are decisive and abiding. In order to retrieve that momentary defeat of to-day he has deigned to ask my help. The gods are good to me, for they have put it within my power to help my emperor in his need. I am going to England to-night in order to carry out his instructions. By to-morrow afternoon I shall have finished my work. The Empire of France will once more rise triumphant and glorious out of the ashes of a brief defeat; the emperor will again be master of Europe; and I, the humble instrument of his reconquered glory, shall enjoy to the full his bounty and his gratitude."

He paused for lack of breath. Crystal's voice, cold and measured, broke in on the silence that ensued.

"And in what way does all this concern me, M. de Marmont?" she asked.

"It concerns your whole future, Crystal," he replied. "You must have known all along that I have never ceased to love you. Your father's injustice I am willing to forget. Your troth was plighted to me, and I have done nothing to deserve the insults which he thought fit to heap upon me. I wish you to know, Crystal, that my love is still yours, and that the fortune and glory which I now go forth to win I will place with inexpressible joy at your feet."

She shrugged her shoulders and an air of supreme indifference spread over her face.

"Is that all?" she asked coldly.

"All? What do you mean? I don't understand you."

"I mean that you persuaded me to listen to you on the pretense that you had news to tell

me of the battle—news on which my happiness depended. You have not told me a single fact that concerns me in the least."

"It concerns you as it concerns me, Crystal. Your happiness is bound up with mine. You are still my promised wife. I go to win glory for my name, which will soon be yours. You and I, Crystal, hand in hand—think of it! We shall be the most brilliant stars that will shine at the imperial court of France."

"You are mad, I think, M. de Marmont. At any rate, you had better go now. Time is getting on, and you will lose your place in the diligence."

She turned away, gathering her draperies round her, and started to walk slowly toward the stairs. But before she reached the lowest step, De Marmont had sprung after her. With a masterful hand upon her arm, he compelled her by physical strength to turn and to face him once more.

"Crystal," he said, forcing himself to speak quietly, even though his voice quivered with excitement and passionate wrath, "as you say, I have only a few moments to spare, but they are just long enough for me to tell you that it is you who are mad. M. de Saint-Genis, no doubt, has been filling your ears with tales of the allied armies' victories. But look at me, Crystal—look at me, and tell me if you have ever seen a man more in deadly earnest. I tell you that I am on my way to aid the emperor in rebuilding his empire on a more solid basis than it has ever had before. Have you ever known Napoleon to fail in what he set himself to do? I tell you that he is not crushed—that he is not even defeated. Within a month the allies will be on their knees begging for peace. The era of your Bourbon kings is more absolutely dead to-day than it has ever been. There is nothing in prospect for a royalist like your father, or like Maurice de Saint-Genis, but exile and humiliation more dire than before. Your father's fate rests entirely in your hands. I can direct his destiny, his life or his death, just as I please. When you are my wife, I will forgive him the insults which he heaped on me at Brestalou, but not before. As for Maurice de Saint-Genis—"

"And what of him, you abominable cur?"

The shout which came from behind him checked the words on De Marmont's lips. He let go his hold of Crystal's arm as he felt two sinewy hands gripping him by the throat. The attack was so swift and so unexpected that he was entirely off his guard. He lost his footing upon the slippery floor, and before he could recover himself he was being forced back and

back until his spine was bent nearly double and his head pressed down backward almost to the level of his knees.

"Let him go, Maurice! You might kill him. Throw him out of the door!"

It was the Comte de Cambray who spoke. He and Saint-Genis had arrived just in time. Maurice was almost blind with rage; he would have killed De Marmont but for the count's intervention, which had the effect of sobering him at the critical moment. He relaxed his convulsive grip on De Marmont's throat; but the latter had already lost his balance. He fell heavily, his body sliding along the slippery floor, while his head struck against the projecting woodwork of the door.

He uttered a loud cry of pain as he fell, then remained lying inert on the ground, and in the dim light his face took on an ashen hue. In an instant Crystal was by his side, woman-like, tender, and full of compassion.

"You have killed him, Maurice!" she cried.

"I hope I have," said Saint-Genis sullenly. "He deserved the death of a cur!"

"Father dear," said Crystal authoritatively, "will you call to Jeanne to bring water, a sponge, and towels—quickly?"

She paid no heed to Saint-Genis; she had already forgotten De Marmont's dastardly attitude toward herself. She only saw that he was helpless and in pain. She knelt by his side, pillowed his head on her lap, and with soothing, gentle fingers felt his shoulders, his arms, to see where he was hurt.

He opened his eyes presently, and encountered those tender blue ones, so full of pity now.

"It is only my head, I think," he said. Then he tried to move, but fell back again with a groan of pain. "My leg is broken, I am afraid," he murmured feebly.

"I had best fetch a doctor," suggested the count.

"If you can find one, father dear," said Crystal. "M. de Marmont ought to be moved at once to his home."

"No, no!" protested Victor feebly. "Not home! To the Trois Rois—the diligence—I must go to England to-night—the emperor's orders!"

"The doctor will decide," said Crystal gently. "Father dear, will you try to find one?"

"I must go!" De Marmont went on. "The diligence starts at nine o'clock."

Again he tried to move, and a great cry of agony rose to his throat—not of physical pain, though that was great, but the utterance of mental torment, of disappointment and wrath

and misery greater than the human heart could bear.

"The emperor's orders!" he cried. "I must go!"

Crystal was silent. There was something that compelled respect in this tragic impotence, this failure brought about by uncontrolled passion at the very hour when success might possibly have availed to change the destinies of the world. Lying here, helpless to aid his emperor through the furious attack of a rival, De Marmont was at this moment more worthy of a good woman's regard than he had been in the flush of his arrogant ambition. His one thought was for his master. He tried to move and could not.

"The emperor's orders!" came repeatedly, with pathetic persistence, from his lips.

Crystal womanlike, tried to soothe and comfort him in his failure, even though his triumph would only have aroused her scorn.

Time sped on. From the towers of the cathedral came booming the hour of nine. The shadows in the narrow street were long and dark; only a faint reflex of the cold light of the moon struck into the open doorway and the white corridor, and detached De Marmont's pale face from the surrounding gloom.

The emperor's orders! Because of a woman they could now no longer be obeyed. If De Marmont had not seen Crystal on the cathedral steps, if he had not followed her, if he had not allowed his passion and arrogant self-will to blind him to time and to surroundings—who knows but the map of Europe might yet have been changed?

The arrival of the Comte de Cambray, accompanied by a doctor and two men carrying an improvised stretcher, broke the silence that had fallen on this strange scene of pathetic failure, which seemed but a humble counterpart of that great and irretrievable one which was being enacted at this same hour far away on the road to Genappe.

After the booming of the cathedral clock, De Marmont had ceased to struggle. He accepted defeat, perhaps because he, too, in spite of himself, saw that the day of his idol's destiny was over. He had accepted Crystal's ministrations with a look of gratitude. Jeanne had put a pillow under his head, and he lay now outwardly placid and quiescent.

Then the surgeon came. The count had been fortunate in securing him, had promised him ample payment, and had brought him along without delay. The doctor praised Mlle. de Cambray for her kindness to the patient,

asked a few questions as to how the accident had occurred, and was satisfied that M. de Marmont had slipped on the tiled floor and then struck his head against the door. He was not likely to examine the purple bruises on the patient's throat; his business began and ended with a broken leg to mend. As the Comte de Cambray assured him that M. de Marmont was wealthy, the worthy doctor most readily offered his patient the hospitality of his own house during his recovery.

He then superintended the lifting of the sick man upon the stretcher; and having taken final leave of the count, of *mademoiselle*, and of all those concerned, and given his instructions to the bearers, he was the first to leave the house.

The count, pleasantly conscious of Christian duty toward an enemy nobly fulfilled, nodded curtly to De Marmont, whom he hated with all his heart, and then turned his back on an exceedingly unpleasant scene, fervently wishing that it had never occurred in his house, and equally fervently thankful that the accident had not more fateful consequences. He retired to his smoking-room, calling to Saint-Genis and to Crystal to follow him.

But Crystal did not go at once. She stood in the dark corridor, watching the stretcher-bearers at their careful, silent work, little guessing on what a filmy thread her whole destiny was hanging at this moment. The fates were spinning, spinning, spinning, and she did not know it. Had the solemn silence which hung so ominously in the twilight not been broken till after the sick man was borne away, the whole of Crystal's future might have been shaped differently.

As he was being carried over the threshold, De Marmont's eyes dwelt upon the graceful form of Crystal, clad all in white, all womanliness and gentleness, her sweet face only faintly distinguishable in the gloom. Saint-Genis—whose nerves were still jarred with all that he had gone through to-day and irritated by Crystal's assiduity beside the sick man—resented that last look of farewell which De Marmont dared to throw upon the woman he loved. An ungenerous impulse caused him to try to aim a last blow at his enemy.

"Come, Crystal," he said coldly. "The man has been better looked after than he deserves. But for your father's interference I should have wrung his neck, like the cowardly brute that he was!"

And with the masterful air of a man who has both right and privilege on his side, he put his arm round Crystal's waist and tried to

draw her away, whispering a tender "Come, Crystal!" in her ear.

De Marmont was suddenly brought back from the land of dreams by what he heard and saw. His own helplessness sent a flood of jealous wrath surging up to his brain. The wild hatred which he had felt for Saint-Genis ever since the humiliation that he had suffered at Brestalou now blinded him to everything save the fact that here was a rival who was gloating over his helplessness—a man who twice already had humiliated him before Crystal de Cambray; a man against whom he knew that he possessed a powerful weapon.

"Crystal!" he called, and at the same time ordered the bearers to halt on the door-step for a moment. "Crystal, will you give me your hand in farewell?"

She would probably have complied with his wish, but Saint-Genis interposed.

"Crystal," he said authoritatively, "your father has already called you. You have done everything that Christian charity demands"; and once more he tried to draw the young girl away.

"Do not touch her, man!" called De Marmont in a loud voice. "A coward like you has no right to touch the hand of a good woman!"

"M. de Marmont," broke in Crystal hotly, "you presume on your helplessness—"

"Pay no heed to the ravings of a maniac, Crystal," interposed Saint-Genis calmly. "He has fallen so low that contemptuous pity is all that he deserves."

"And contempt without pity is all that you deserve, M. de Saint-Genis!" cried De Marmont excitedly. "Ask him, Mlle. Crystal, ask him where is the man who to-day saved his life, whom I myself saw to-day on the roadside, wounded and half dead with fatigue, on horseback, with the inert body of M. de Saint-Genis lying across his saddle-bow? Ask him how he came to lie across that saddle-bow, and whether his English friend and mine, Bobby Clyffurde, did not, as any who passed by could guess, drag him out of the battle at Waterloo and bring him to safety at the risk of his own life!"

De Marmont saw that Saint-Genis, sullen and glowering, was doing his best to drag Crystal away, to prevent her from listening further to this awful indictment, these ravings of a lunatic half distraught with hate.

"Ask him where is Clyffurde now!" he went on, working himself into a veritable fever of vengeful malignity. "Ask him where the poor fellow has crawled to die while the Marquis

de Saint-Genis came back in gay apparel to court Mlle. Crystal de Cambray! Ah, M. de Saint-Genis, you tried to heap opprobrium upon me—you talked glibly of contempt and of pity. Of a truth 'tis I do pity you now, for Mlle. Crystal will surely ask you all those questions, and, by Heaven, I marvel how you will answer them!"

He fell back exhausted. With a wild cry like that of a beast in fury, Saint-Genis seized the nearest weapon that came to his hand—a heavy oak chair which stood against the wall in the corridor—and brandished it over his accuser's head. Had not Crystal interposed, he would have killed Victor de Marmont with one blow. Even so, he tried to push her aside in order to get a clear passage for his mad lust to kill.

"Take the sick man away, quick!" cried Crystal to the stretcher-bearers.

Realizing the danger, they hurried over the threshold with their burden as fast as they could, and out into the street.

Crystal, seizing hold of the front door, shut it to with a loud bang after them. Then, with a cry that was primitive in its passion—almost as savage as that of a lioness in the desert who has been robbed of her young—she turned upon Saint-Genis.

"Where is he now?" she called, and her voice was unrecognizable, harsh and hoarse and peremptory.

"Crystal, let me assure you," protested Maurice, "that I have already done all that lay in my power—"

"Where is he now?" she interrupted, with the same fierce intensity.

She stood there before him—wild, haggard, palpitating—a passionate creature passionately demanding to know where the loved one was. It seemed as if she would have torn the words out of Saint-Genis's throat, so bitter and intense was her look of contempt.

Her father, very much upset and ruffled by all that he had heard, come out of his room just in time to see the stretcher-bearers disappearing with their burden through the front door, and the door itself closed to with a bang by Crystal. Truly his sense of decorum had received a severe shock. Now he had the additional mortification of seeing his beautiful daughter—his dainty and aristocratic Crystal—in a state bordering on frenzy.

"My darling Crystal—" he began, as he made his way to her side and put a restraining hand upon her arm.

But Crystal was far beyond his control. Shaking off his hand, paying no heed to him,

she went closer up to Saint-Genis and once more repeated her ardent, passionate query:

"Where is he now?"

"At the English hospital, I hope," said Saint-Genis with as much dignity as he could command. "Have I not assured you, Crystal, that I've done all I could—"

"At the English hospital—you hope?" she retorted in a voice that sounded trenchant and shrill through the overwhelming passion which shook and choked it in her throat. "But the roadside—where you left him to die in a ditch like a dog that has no home—where was that?"

"I gave full directions at the English hospital," he replied. "I arranged for an ambulance to go and find him, for a bed to be prepared for him. I—"

"Give me those directions," she commanded.

"On the way to Waterloo, on the left side of the road, close by the stone that marks the sixth kilometer. It is just on this side of the forest of Soignes. No driver can fail to find the place, Crystal. The ambulance—"

But now she was no longer listening to him. She had abruptly turned her back on him and made for the door. Her father interposed.

"What do you want to do, Crystal?" he said peremptorily.

"Go to him, of course," she said quietly; for she was quite calm now—outwardly, at any rate.

"But you do not know where he is!"

"I'll go to the English hospital first. Father dear, will you let me pass?"

"Crystal," said the count firmly, as he stood his ground between his daughter and the door, "you cannot go rushing through the streets of Brussels alone, at this hour of the night—through all the soldiery and all the drunken rabble."

"He is dying," she retorted, "and I am going to find him!"

"You have taken leave of your senses, Crystal," said the count sternly. "You seem to have forgotten your own dignity—"

"Father, let me go!" she demanded; for she had tried to measure her physical strength against his, and he was holding her wrists, with a look of great anger on his face.

"I tell you, Crystal," he said, "that you cannot go! I will do all that lies in my power in the matter, I promise you. Maurice," he added harshly, "if he has a spark of manhood left in him, will do his best to second me; but I cannot allow my daughter to go into the streets at this hour of the night!"

"But you cannot prevent your sister from doing as she likes!" here broke in a tart voice.

"Crystal, child, try to bear up while I run to the English hospital first, and, if necessary, to the English doctor afterward. And you *monsieur mon frère*, be good enough to allow Jeanne to open the door for me!"

The Duchesse d'Agen in bonnet and shawl, helpful and practical, made her way quietly to the door, preceded by the faithful Jeanne. With a cry of infinite relief, almost of happiness, Crystal at last managed to disengage herself from her father's grasp and ran to the old lady.

"*Ma tante*," she said imploringly, "take me with you! If I do not go to find him now, at once, my heart will break!"

The count shrugged his shoulders and stood aside. He knew that in an argument with his sister he was sure to be worsted; and there was a look in *madame's* face which even in this dim twilight he knew how to interpret. It meant that *madame* would carry out her program just as she had stated it, and that she would take Crystal with her, with or without the father's consent.

Realizing this, the count had but one course left open to him, and that was to safeguard his dignity by making the best of the situation.

"Well, my dear Sophie," he said, "I suppose, if you insist on having your way, you must have it; though what the women of our rank are coming to nowadays I cannot imagine. At the same time, I for my part must insist that Crystal should at least put on a bonnet and shawl, and should not career about the streets dressed like a kitchen wench."

"Crystal," whispered *madame*, who was nothing if not practical, "do as your father wishes. It will save a lot of argument, and save time as well."

But even before the words were out of *madame's* mouth, Crystal was running along the corridor, ready to obey. At the foot of the stairs Saint-Genis intercepted her.

"Let me pass!" she cried wildly.

"Not before you have said that you have forgiven me!" he entreated, clinging to her white draperies with a passionate gesture of appeal.

An exclamation which was almost one of loathing escaped her lips, and with a jerk she freed her skirt from his clutch. Then she ran quickly up the stairs. Outside the door of her own room, on the first landing, she paused for one minute, and from out the gloom her voice came to the man below like the knell of passing hope.

"If he comes back alive from the death to which you condemned him," she said, "I may in the future endure the sight of you again. If he dies—may God forgive you!"

The opening and shutting of a door told him that she was gone, and he was left in company with his shame.

CHAPTER XVI

THE WINNING HAND

UNTIL far into the night the air reverberated with the distant sound of cannonading, from the direction of Genappe and from that of Wavre; but just before dawn all was still. The stream of convoys which bore the wounded along the road to Brussels from Mont Saint-Jean and Hougomont and La Haye Sainte had momentarily ceased its endless course. The sky had the perfect serenity of a mid-summer night, starlit and azure, with the honey-colored moon sinking slowly down toward the west.

Here, at the edge of the wood, the air had a sweet smell of wet earth and damp moss, and of the freshly cut hay in a near-by meadow. It had all the delicious softness of a loved one's embrace.

Through the roar of distant cannonading, Clyffurde had slept. For a time after Saint-Genis left him he had watched the long, straight road with dull, half-closed eyes. He had seen the first convoy, overfilled with wounded men lying huddled on heaped-up straw, and had thanked God that he was lying on this exquisitely soft carpet which nature had made for him of thousands of tiny green plants—moss, grass, weeds, young tendrils, growing buds, and opening leaves that were delicious to the touch.

He had quite forgotten that he was wounded. Neither his head nor his leg nor his arm seemed to hurt him now. He was able to think in peace of Crystal and of her happiness.

Saint-Genis would have come to her by now. She would be happy to see him safe and well, and perhaps, in the midst of her joy, she would think of the friend who so gladly offered up his life for her.

It was not yet dawn, even though far away in the east there was a luminous veil that made the sky look like living silver. Behind him, among the trees, there were sounds of fluttering. The birds were no longer asleep; they had not begun to sing, but they were shaking out their feathers and opening tiny, round eyes in farewell to departing night.

That gentle fluttering was a sweet lullaby, and Clyffurde slept and dreamed. He dreamed that the fluttering became louder and louder, and that instead of birds, it was a group of angels that shook their wings and stood around him as he slept.

One of the angels came nearer and laid a hand upon his head; and Bobby dreamed that the angel spoke. The words that it said filled his heart with unearthly happiness.

"My love! My love!" the angel said. "Will you try to live for my sake?"

Bobby would not open his eyes, for fear the angel might go away. And though he knew exactly where he was, and could feel the soft carpet of leaves and smell the sweet moisture in the air, he knew that he must still be dreaming, for angels are not of this earth.

Then a strong, kind hand touched his wrist and felt the beating of his heart, and a rough, pleasant voice said in English:

"He is exhausted and very weak, but the fever is not high; he will soon be all right!"

And to add to the strangeness of his dream, the angel's voice near him murmured:

"Thank God! Thank God!"

Why should an angel thank God that he—Bobby Clyffurde—was not likely to die?

He opened his eyes to see what it all meant. He saw bending over him a face that was more exquisitely fair than any that man had ever seen; eyes that were bluer than the sky above; lips that trembled like rose-leaves in the breeze. He was still dreaming, and there was a haze between him and the vision of loveliness.

"Have you got that stretcher ready?" said the kind, rough voice, somewhere close by.

"Yes, sir," replied two other voices.

But the lips close above him said nothing, and it was Bobby now who murmured:

"My love, is it you?"

"Your love for always," the dear lips replied. "Nothing shall ever part us now. Yours for always, to bring you back to life! Yours when you will claim me—yours for life!"

They lifted him into a stretcher and then into a carriage, and a very kind face, which he quickly enough recognized as that of the Duchesse d'Agen, smiled encouragingly upon him. He could not help but ask a very pertinent question:

"*Madame la duchesse*, is all this really happening?"

"Why, yes, my good man," *madame* replied; and indeed there was nothing dreamlike in her tart, dry voice. "Crystal and I have dragged Dr. Scott away from the bedside of

innumerable other sick and wounded men, and also from any hope of well-earned rest to-night. We have really brought him to a spot very accurately described by our worthy friend, M. de Saint-Genis, but where unfortunately you had not chosen to remain, else we had found you an hour sooner. Is there anything else you want to know?"

"Oh, yes, *madame la duchesse*, many things," murmured Bobby. "Please go on telling me."

"Well," said the duchess, "perhaps you would like to know that some kind of instinct, or perhaps the hand of God, guided one of our party to the place where you had gone to sleep. You may also wish to know that though you seem to be in a bad way for the present, you are going to be nursed back to life under Dr. Scott's hospitable roof. Since Crystal has undertaken to do the nursing, I imagine that my time for the next six weeks will be taken up in arguing with my dear and pompous brother that he will now have to give his consent to his daughter becoming the wife of a vendor of gloves!"

Bobby contrived to smile.

"Do you think that if I promised never to buy or sell gloves again, but in future to try

and live like a gentleman—do you think that he would consent?"

"I think, my dear boy," said *madame*, subduing her harsh voice to tones of gentleness, "that after my brother knows all that I know, and all that his daughter desires, he will be proud to welcome you as his son!"

The doctor's wide barouche lumbered slowly along the road. In the east, the luminous veil that still hid the rising sun had taken on a hue of rosy gold. The birds, now fully awake, sang their morning hymn. From the direction of Wavre came once more the cannons' roar.

Inside the carriage Dr. Scott, sitting at the feet of his patient, gave a peremptory order for silence. But Clyffurde, immeasurably happy and contented, looked up and saw Crystal de Cambray—no longer a girl now, but a beautiful woman who had learned to the last letter the great lesson of love. She sat close beside him; her arm was round his reclining head. Looking at her, he saw the love-light in her dear eyes whenever she turned them on him.

And presently, when the old duchess engaged Dr. Scott in a close and heated argument, he felt sweet-scented lips pressed against his own.

THE END

NEXT MONTH'S NOVEL—The June number of **MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE** will contain a book-length novel by an American author resident in London, where her work has become widely known for its originality and interest. Her early short stories were written for this magazine, so it is peculiarly appropriate that her first novel to be published in her native country should also appear in our pages.

OLD LOVES FOR NEW

BY ELIZABETH YORK MILLER

is a story of present-day life in New York. Its heroine—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say its leading feminine character—is Rose Warden, an American prima donna who is of humble origin, but who has achieved operatic fame and a temperament. She is engaged to marry Fred Garvice, who has plenty of money and a divorced wife. The latter, Mary Garvice, also plays an important part in Mrs. Miller's novel, which, besides being a story of intense interest, is also a remarkable study of the problems that arise from the clash of a new passion and an old allegiance.

The other characters of "Old Loves for New" are striking and entertaining types of various grades of New York society. The whole story is down-to-date in every respect, and we prophesy that it will be one of the most popular novels of the year.

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